

Halesowen

CHRONICLE



Thursday, March 22, 2018

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HOLE LOT OF CASH TO REPAIR ROADS

Report by Marion Brennan

MORE than half a million pounds is being spent on mending Dudley's crumbling roads after sub-zero temperatures continue to cause havoc to the borough's highways.

It comes after a new study shows that damage caused by potholes cost motorists in the West Midlands more than £100 million last year.

The figures from vehicle repair company Kwik-Fit showed that the overall cost to the nation's drivers was £915m – over a third more than figures two years ago.

Dudley Council has announced a further £164,000 to help repair damage to road surfaces after a winter that has taken a heavy toll. It follows funding of £238,000 earlier this year and £150,000 in December.

Cllr Karen Shakespeare Bosses say potholes have been made worse or new ones appeared due to freeze and thaws.

The council has vowed to prioritise potholes despite slashing £300,000 from its streets budget in October. They claim to have 'streamlined' the service by focusing on the borough's biggest and busiest roads. The latest funding is part of an £844,000 pot of money from the Department for Transport paid to the West Midlands Combined Authority for the region.

Harsh

In Dudley pothole crews have been working round-the-clock since the harsh weather hit. The authority was already coping with damage caused by snow and ice in December.

Councillor Karen Shakespeare, cabinet member for environmental services, said: "The snow and ice we have had in recent weeks has really hit our roads hard but this extra money will go a long way in helping us deal with the potholes and other road defects. Our crews are working hard to identify areas and respond to reports, and I would like to thank motorists for bearing with us."

Council leader Patrick Harley denied the authority's focus on main roads meant minor streets would be left unattended, insisting teams could often react to potholes on quieter roads more quickly.

HOTSHOT RACHEL PUTS ON HER BEST FOR ENGLAND



Halesowen Athletics Club's Rachel Wallader will be taking part in the Commonwealth Games in Australia next month

AN athlete will be temporarily swapping her job at Sandwell College for Australia's Gold Coast when she represents Team England in shot put at the Commonwealth Games.

Rachel Wallader, aged 28, is part of the athletics squad heading Down Under for the games, which start on April 4. She finished fourth at the 2014 Commonwealth Games in Glasgow after throwing personal best but is hoping to improve on that when the competition gets under way on April 12.

"It's great to represent my country again in a sport I love. It's a great feeling wearing your country's colours," said Rachel, who took up athletics when she was 10.

"I joined Halesowen Athletics Club, where my coach at the time Julie Bellfield carried me through until she felt I had outgrown her shot put coaching. We are still in contact and she supports me fully. I wouldn't be where I am now if she hadn't pushed me in the right direction all those years ago."

"At Halesowen I competed in many events, cross country, heptathlon and individual events, and 18 years later I find myself going to my second Commonwealth Games," said Rachel.

In 2017 she took part in the women's shot put at the World Championships in London.

Rachel trains six times a week and also works full time at Sandwell College as the work placements officer for the supported learning department.

FIREARMS

Commissioner wants to end gun 'subsidy'

HOME Secretary Amber Rudd has been urged to drastically increase fees that police can charge for firearms licences to stop forces from 'subsidising' gun ownership.

West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner David Jamieson says the region's cash-strapped force takes a financial hit of nearly £37 every time it issues a firearms certificate. He said the total loss last year was £98,000.

Current firearms charges do not meet West Midlands Police's administration costs from processing applications and making the relevant checks.

TRANSPORT

On your bike for new cycle project

A LANDMARK initiative to get more people out of motor vehicles and on to bicycles in the West Midlands has been announced.

Thousands of bikes will hit the streets in Wolverhampton, Birmingham and Coventry in September before rolling out in Walsall, Sandwell, Dudley and Solihull in 2019.

Nextbike has been picked by Transport for West Midlands, part of the West Midlands Combined Authority, to run bike-share, the UK's largest docked pay-to-cycle scheme outside London and its famous 'Boris bikes'. It will also create around 50 jobs.

POLICE

Schools and colleges are sent bomb threat

HUNDREDS of schools and colleges across the UK – including in the Black Country – were emailed bomb threats.

West Midlands Police confirmed they were investigating messages sent to a number of schools in the region on Monday, said to be 'false and malicious'.

Among those sent threats were Ormiston Sandwell Community Academy in Tividale and Walsall College.

According to reports, the hoax was part of a feud between rival Minecraft gamers.

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Warren Hawksley in 2008

Cocaine king will have to pay back thousands

THE KINGPIN of a multi-million pound cocaine racket centred on Kingswinford has been ordered to pay back more than £500,000 of his ill-gotten gains.

Khalad Uddin had lived a luxury lifestyle as he gathered more than £2 million from his illegal activity, which saw him act as a link between Albanian gangsters in London and drug dealers in Kingswinford.

The crook, who was last year jailed for 16 years, has now been ordered to pay back some of his ill-gotten riches or face further time behind bars.

At a confiscation hearing, Judge Murray Creed declared Uddin had profited £2,016,351 from his offending. But the 36-year-old had just £541,334.52 available to hand back to the authorities.

Uddin's property will be sold to gather some of the cash, Birmingham Crown Court heard on Friday. If he fails to pay up within the next three months he could face an extra five years in jail.

The cocaine gang was smashed by undercover police and saw 14 criminals last year jailed for a total of more than 100 years. The network included a five-strong gang in Kingswinford.

Uddin, described as the 'spider at the centre of the web', co-ordinated crooks in the Black Country, Oxford, the West Country and London. The defendant, formerly of Little Brewery Street, Oxford, admitted money laundering and two counts of conspiracy to supply cocaine. His jail term is running concurrently with a 14-year sentence for conspiracy to transfer firearms and ammunition.

Uddin lived lavishly, spending £62,000 on renting fast cars and expensive properties. He had 70 pairs of designer jeans.

West Side Story's happy ending



Planning a wedding – Mitch Bastable proposed to partner Beth Berwick-Lowe on stage in Stourbridge last week, with Beth as Maria and Mitch playing Bernardo.

WEST Side Story finally got its happy ending when one actor popped the question to his leading lady for real.

Mitch Bastable and Beth Berwick-Lowe are both members of Tab Operatic Society and both had major roles when the famous musical was staged in Stourbridge

to know him beyond his slightly 'full on' public persona, and will remember him as a very kind and generous man, who was always very supportive."

Halesowen and Rowley Regis Conservative MP James Morris, said: "He served as Halesowen's MP for five years and is still fondly remembered by many for the way he represented the area and his strong opinions."

Stone's Tory MP Sir Bill Cash said of his fellow Maastricht rebel: "He was a great Eurosceptic."

Mr Hawksley is survived by his wife Kathleen and two daughters.

£20,000 bid to restore an historic burial site

AN historic cemetery is set for a revamp after campaigners launched a bid to restore graves and headstones.

Lye and Wollescote Cemetery, near Stourbridge, is in line for the restoration after a bid was made by a friends of the cemetery group. Soldiers from the First World War are among those buried at the site.

The move comes after the site's chapel which houses Dudley Council's Citizenship and Registration Services underwent a £1 million revamp in 2015.

A council report outlining the plans said: "An application has been received from Friends of Lye and Wollescote Cemetery, which supports the management of the cemetery so that it is a welcoming, accessible place for everyone in the community to be proud of and enjoy."

"The group is seeking £5,000 towards the £20,000 estimated cost of undertaking restoration to some of the famous graves and headstones in the cemetery, to enhance the walking tours for schools, students and the community."

The cemetery is looked after by the friends group. The site dates back to the Victorian era.

Local historian and author Jean Weston said: "A lot of people who helped to build Lye during the 19th century as an important industrial area are buried there."

MP campaigns on job exploitation

DUDLEY North MP Ian Austin has called for a ban on companies taking people on for unpaid work trials which have no guaranteed job offer at the end.

Mr Austin said it was wrong that some businesses were asking potential staff to work for no money.

He cites one case in which prospective employees were told to work for 40 hours before they would be considered for a job.

The Labour MP said: "I'm not against proper work experience programmes for students but I have met young people in Dudley who have been expected to do unpaid shifts for free before they are even considered for a job. I think it is completely unacceptable. I want to see this exploitative practice banned. The Government should take action."

Jobs fair in town

HALESOWEN and Rowley Regis MP James Morris is holding his tenth jobs fair tomorrow (Friday) at the LifeCentre Church in Little Cornbow, Halesowen, from 10am to 2pm. More than 30 local employers and training providers will be taking part.

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Teenager is locked up after drug raid on flat

A TEENAGER has been locked up for three years after heroin and crack cocaine worth more than £4,000 were found in a raid on his flat.

Shane Bowater tried to escape through the back door but he ran straight into a waiting policeman, a court heard.

Mr Peter Grice, prosecuting, said officers converged on High Street, Lye, on February 27 last year. Bowater, who was 17 at the time, tried to flee with a bag stuffed with drugs and associated paraphernalia but was caught and arrested.

Inside the bag were 16 packets of crack cocaine with a street value of £770 and 80 wraps of heroin worth £820. Also found were £110 cash, a list of names and numbers, and a mobile phone with messages linking him to drug dealers.

Wolverhampton Crown Court heard a search revealed two digital scales, another dealer list and a mobile phone containing 'relevant messages', plus more heroin and crack cocaine.

In total, he was in possession of £2,300 worth of heroin and crack cocaine with a street value of £1,840.

Defending Bowater, Ms Nicole Steers said he had confessed to using and selling cannabis previously and claimed to have 'found' the heroin and crack cocaine. "He stole them," she said. "He thought it was cannabis."

She added that Bowater had to 'fend for himself' when he was put into care after the deaths of both of his parents.

Bowater, now 18, of Highland Road, Dudley, admitted two charges of possession of Class A drugs with intent to supply others.

He was sent to a young offender institution for three years.

Walking on fire for charity funds

A LAW firm with offices across the Black Country and Worcestershire is organising a fire and ice event near Dudley to help a local charity.

Thursfields Solicitors is inviting companies to take part raising money for Black Country Women's Aid by entering a team of five to take part in fire and glass walking at Himley Hall on April 25.

Entry will cost £300 per team and £30 for spectators or £30 per person. The price includes a hot buffet and live music from The Pete Boddis Band.

Thursfields, which has offices in Sedgley, Halesowen, Stourport and Kidderminster, will be helping the charity's work in the local area with the fundraiser.

Former Baggies star striker is bankrupt



Lee Hughes has been declared bankrupt

FORMER West Bromwich Albion hero Lee Hughes has been declared bankrupt.

Hughes, 41, who earned £20,000-a-week as a Premiership striker, joined non-league Halesowen Town FC earlier this month.

The former roofer began his career at Kidderminster Harriers before joining the Baggies, leaving in 2001 when he signed for Coventry for £5 million.

Last May he took his first steps in management when he became player-manager at Worcester City but

ended his contract to join for Evo-Stik Premier side Halesowen Town.

Hughes, who also played for AFC Telford, had two spells at the Baggies from 1997-2001 and 2002-2004, scoring 90 goals in 211 games.

He scored 70 goals in 139 games for Harriers.

Dangerous

He scored 203 league goals with seven different clubs but spent three years out of the game when he was sent to prison in August 2004 for causing a death by dangerous driving.

After his release from prison in August 2007, he played at Oldham, Blackpool, Notts County and Port Vale. He was then appointed as Worcester City's joint manager, after agreeing to rejoin the relegated National League North side.

The news of his bankruptcy was announced in the London Gazette, the official public record for bankrupts, after a petition was filed in January and heard in the High Court earlier this month.

Smethwick-born Hughes declined to comment.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Driver is charged over crash death

AN electrician has been charged over the death of a mother in a car crash near her home in Lower Gornal.

Vikki Jones, aged 30, died following the incident in Wood Road in Lower Gornal in September.

Tyler Kendall, 22, of Whitebeam Close, Lower Gornal, has been charged with causing death by dangerous driving. He has also been charged with failing to stop after a road accident. Kendall will appear before Walsall magistrates on April 4.

Following Ms Jones' death, a vigil was held by members of the community and there were calls for road safety measures.

Talent show is now on Sunday

A TALENT show that fell victim to last weekend's snow has been re-arranged for this weekend.

Halesowen's Got Talent should have been held in Benjamin's in Birmingham Street last Sunday.

The competition, which is being held for the first time, will now take place on Sunday, March 25, from 1pm to 6pm. There is a £150 prize for the winner.

The winner and runner-up will also be invited to perform at the town's annual carnival and music festival on July 7.

Business park at heart of new zone

DUDLEY is set for an economic boost as council bosses were yesterday (Wednesday) discussing plans for a new business estate, as part of the DY5 Enterprise Zone.

A Local Development Order (LDO) for Blackbrook Valley in Brierley Hill could be rolled out on April 1 if Dudley Council's cabinet approved the plans.

The LDO would run for 10 years and make it easier for businesses to set up there by simplifying the planning process.

Blackbrook Valley is a key site in the DY5 Enterprise Zone.

Artist is remembered at art gallery display

AN art gallery and studios is staging an exhibition by a late local artist.

A Ewart Chapman's Black Country industrial and portrait work is on show at The Art Yard in Reddall Hill Road, Cradley Heath, until April 14.

His painting and sketch work is based on Black Country industry and local characters he met.

Mr Chapman also founded Chapman's Electrical in Cradley Heath in 1925.

It's a fairytale ending for abandoned dog Elsa

AN abandoned dog found close to death at a Black Country nature reserve has brought happiness to a grieving mother and daughter.

French mastiff Elsa almost did not make it when she was discovered alone and almost frozen at Corngreaves Nature Reserve in Cradley Heath at the end of last year.

Birmingham's Animal House charity got the call to help and staff were shocked at the state of the dog, who was given the name Elsa, after one of the characters in the film Frozen.

She weighed about 17kg, and was skin and bones, but animal rescuers took her in and nurtured her back to health. Her story was shared online and Elsa soon attracted a celebrity following – with more than 400 people venturing along to see her at a 'meet and greet' event at Your Vets in Smethwick. And after going back and forth between foster homes, Elsa has now finally found her forever home with Louise Haywood and her 25-year-old daughter Philippa, in Northfields, Birmingham.

Settled

Elsa, thought to be about four years old, has quickly settled in with her new owners, as well as new feline friends Daisy and Fif and rescue sheepdog Fluff. Philippa and Louise revealed how Elsa's arrival helped cure their broken hearts after two of their beloved pets died within three months of each other.

Philippa said: "We suffered two tragic losses within 12 weeks of each other – our bull mastiffs Juno and Ivan, both aged four.

"It left us heartbroken. We had watched Elsa's story and she came to us to foster after not getting along with the previous fosterer's dog. And we didn't want her to leave.

"It's like she's always been here – she has brought the family so much love and laughter."

Louise, aged 57, said Elsa loved to rest and would often disappear at about 10pm to sleep in one of the beds upstairs. She also revealed how Elsa loves walks, and chasing after tennis balls. Louise's niece Sophia, who lives nearby, also said: "I see her every day and we walk with my dog too. It brings tears of joy to see Elsa happy and my family smile again."



Cousins Sophia Freeman, left, and Philippa Haywood with Elsa, who was close to death when she was found



The healthy French mastiff, who loves to play



Elsa seen shortly after she was abandoned

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£32m revamp under way at business park

A CEREMONY has marked the start of work on a multi-million pound scheme to build new industrial units in Tipton.

Halesowen-based A&H Construction has been appointed by developers CEG to deliver the revamp of Vaughan Park, a £32 million scheme it is hoped will create up to 1,000 jobs.

CEG has secured planning permission from Sandwell Council to build five industrial units totalling 80,000 sq ft. The scheme involves flattening most of the existing buildings on land neighbouring the Thomas Dudley foundry and CAB Autos factory.

Further work on the 28-acre site could see the business park expanded to 500,000 sq ft of industrial and warehouse space.

At a ceremony to break ground and mark the start of construction work, Sandwell's regeneration cabinet member, Councillor Paul Moore, said it was encouraging to see another speculative commercial development taking place in the borough.

He said: "There is no doubt that Sandwell offers businesses wishing to expand and grow a chance to move to an area at the forefront of industry, with established supply chains, great access to the motorway network as well as a highly skilled workforce."

A&H Construction started work on the site last week and units will be ready later this year.

Audition afternoon as theatre group recruits

WOLVERHAMPTON Musical Comedy Company is looking for recruits when it holds an open audition at the Dormston Centre in Sedgley on Sunday afternoon from 1 to 4. Places are available for over 16s, email hollywhitemuscom@gmail.com or call 07920011740.



Claire Dolman pairs a hat and dress at the museum



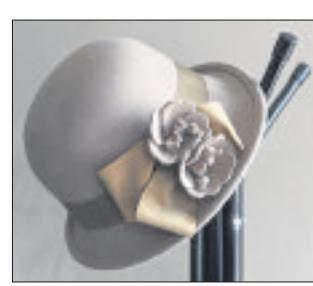
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Claire puts the finishing touch to a hat



A dress and the patterns it was made to



A stylish period hat



There is always something that needs ironing

Claire's got history all sewn up

FROM a chainmaker in the forge to a barmaid at the Bottle and Glass – it's seamstress Claire Dolman's job to help bring the Black Country Living Museum's costumed characters to life.

Behind the scenes, Claire and her team of six volunteers are hard at

work creating authentic-looking outfits for around 200 staff.

"The clothes are an important part of the story that we are trying to tell at the museum so we want them to be the best they can be and look correct for the period we are focusing on," says Claire, who has worked at the attraction for almost four years.

Each costume is thoroughly researched by the team who will look at

what someone of that age and class would have been wearing at the time, paying attention to all the details.

"It's easy to get influenced by what is fashionable now but we need to look at the colours and prints that would have been around then," says 41-year-old Claire, from Wolverhampton, who uses a combination of original patterns, photographs and tailors' books from the period.

The museum's collection of original clothing is also used to guide the team and then can also use them to make a pattern to create a replica garment. Materials such as wool and cotton come from a range of suppliers but sometimes inspiration will strike when Claire is out and about.

"I found a duvet cover in Primark with a flower print that was spot-on for 1880s-style dress. As soon as I

saw it, I knew I had seen something like it before from that period. I was pleased with how the dress turned out and it only took a day-and-a-half," says Claire, who has always enjoyed sewing as a hobby.

Hats had always proved a challenge but Claire has taken a millinery course to help hone her skills. Claire also runs a knitting club at the museum.

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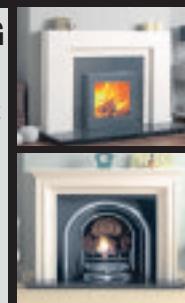
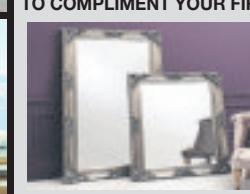
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Badger cull issue is not all black and white

UNSURPRISINGLY, public opinion is divided over plans to extend the badger cull to include Staffordshire.

On the one hand, the animal rights activists say that the mass killing of wildlife is barbaric and unscientific. On the other are the farmers, who say that thousands more cattle will have to be slaughtered unless something is done about bovine TB which is being spread by badgers.

Experience tells me it's wise to sit on the fence with this one. That's the trouble with badgers. It's never a black and white issue.

...

LET'S get this right. West Midlands Police no longer has police stations in Walsall and Dudley, two of the biggest towns in the force area. It is also planning to shut down a further 24 stations, which will leave many of our suburban and village communities without a base, saving the force an estimated £5 million a year.

Police and crime commissioner David Jamieson says the cuts are necessary to protect the number of officers as the force faces a squeeze on finances.

"It's important to remember policing is about people not buildings," he says.

I was almost convinced. But then we get the bombshell that they are planning to spend £56 million on refurbishing the police stations in Wolverhampton and West Bromwich, as well as completely redeveloping the one at Brierley Hill.

I'm sure these new-look police stations will be very nice, but I can't help but think that anybody who gets beaten up, mugged or stabbed in the centre of Walsall or Dudley would prefer a police station within walking distance. Even if it hasn't had a refurb.

■ ■ ■

WHAT is it with kids today? According to a survey, they are turning their back on alcohol and bingeing instead on coffee.

One in five millennials describes themselves as teetotal, and those that do drink average just two-and-a-half pints a week. Which explains why there were 6,000 pub closures between 2011 and 2016, and 2,000 new coffee shops opening over the same time. I suppose that is a good thing, but I do wonder about this generation.

They wander around, headphones in the ears, oblivious to what is going on around them; bottle of water in the one and mobile phone in the other. And their idea of a good time involves sitting in Starbucks quaffing bucket-sized mugs of extra-strong coffee, often glued to their computer screens. Probably posting stuff on Twitter about Brexit or something.

Their parents must be tearing their hair out, hoping they will grow out of it.

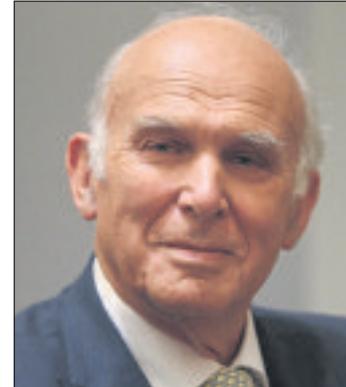
As the new 'Millionaire' host Clarkson gets some tips



Stephen Hawking – admired, cherished and respected by so many millions



Jeremy Clarkson – back on TV after altercation ended his BBC career



Vince Cable – says many older folk who opted for Brexit, "driven by nostalgia"

Best advice Jeremy: Watch what you say

AS part of his readmission to terrestrial television and civilised society, Jeremy Clarkson is to be the new host of Who Wants to be a Millionaire (ITV). In view of the unpleasant altercation with a producer which ended his BBC career, the great and good have been queuing up to offer the former Top Gear presenter advice. If Clarkson can avoid shouting "You lazy Irish ----!" at Celtic colleagues and punching them in the mouth, that'll help.

SO farewell, Stephen Hawking. Never in the field of modern science has one man been so admired, cherished and respected by so many millions of people who hadn't a clue what he was on about.

I AM taken to task for suggesting that in Black Country dialect, Barclays Bank might be pronounced "bonk." A reader insists that while "bonk" would be used to describe a hill or steep rise, a high-street bank is "bank." To make things entirely clear, he adds that "bankers" is pronounced as "them robbdoggin' piggantin' wammels." I am much obliged.

VINCE Cable says many older folk who opted for Brexit, "were driven by a nostalgia for a world where passports were blue, faces were white and the world was coloured imperial pink." Really? And how many older citizens has the Lib-Dem leader interviewed to arrive at this curious conclusion? Might it not be that older voters remember voting for a free-trade area of six nations, ended up in a superstate of 27 countries and decided this was no place for the UK to be? To lump all Brexit voters into the white-face, pink-map brigade is as foolish as suggesting that young people voted Remain because they're all a bunch of wimps, frit to

THE BEST OF PETER RHODES



death of change and terrified by a challenge. Clearly, a ludicrous notion.

I REFERRED recently to the strange names used in television crime dramas. (Cormoran Strike, Kip Glaspie, etc) Walking past a canal I noticed the site where chemical toilets are discharged. What a great name for a detective it would make. Introducing Eisan Point.

THIS eternally slow spring reminds me of a conversation with an old chap on the harbour wall at Axmouth some years ago when the rain was hammering down from a leaden March sky rather like this week's. "Summer must come," he intoned with a wise smile. That year, it didn't.

AFTER campaigns, such as March4Women, NotMyJob and International Women's Day, I am made shamefully aware how many women seem to be desperately unhappy about the unfairness of being female and, presumably, think being a bloke is much easier. I am therefore delighted to announce the Tofad Programme. It is inspired by the "empathy bellies" worn by some caring, considerate men who want to know how it feels to be pregnant, and hobble around wearing a padded suit with a weighted, swollen abdomen. Under the Tofad Programme, women can become a man for 24 hours. Firstly, they will be surgically equipped with a fully functioning male thingy. Next, they will get a large injection of testosterone which will not only make the thingy work, but also make them fantasise about sex

20 times a day which is apparently the average for a young male (in later life one's thoughts turn to flatpack). And then, perked up by the male hormone and equipped with this curious appendage which cannot decide whether it's a battering ram or the last turkey in the shop, they will be released into society.

I BELIEVE women would come away from the Tofad (Todger For A Day) experience with a much better understanding of the male of the species. They might come to see men not as rampaging beasts but as models of restraint. On the other hand, they may thoroughly enjoy the experience and refuse to hand back the equipment. The NHS has the devil of a job getting old crutches back, so you can imagine the problem.

WAS anyone else of a certain age surprised by the oft-repeated safety warnings from the gunpowder makers in Lucy Worsley's Fireworks for a Tudor Queen (BBC4)? When I were a lad, you could buy a chemistry set at your local toy shop which not only contained the ingredients for gunpowder but also the instructions on how to blend it. While the Beeb's experts mixed gunpowder cautiously with a non-metallic stirrer, we merrily whisked ours up with a teaspoon. It really is amazing that so many men now drawing a pension have a full complement of fingers and toes.

STILL on weapons of mass destruction, how strange it is that the NHS, which is constantly wagging its finger and warning us of the long-term dangers of booze and baccy, waited a week before suggesting it might be an idea for people close to the Salisbury nerve-agent attack to wash their clothes.



Blink and all our city shops will be gone . . .

Years ago when my daughter was small I would make a lot of her clothes. I always found sewing quite relaxing.

Nothing complicated, just simple little dresses in fun material. She loved them. But I remember when her age suddenly – it seemed that way to me as her mother – went into double figures she asked that instead of home-made could she shop with her friends and go to the 'teenage clothes shops'. This was not so much to buy, but more to check out the latest fashions and have a giggle with her friends. That was when 'going into town' was a fun day out.

How things have changed over the years and sadly now quicker than ever. So many stores seem to be struggling and numerous branches closing down. For years we have worried about empty shops in Wolverhampton but if the big chains like New Look and Debenhams, are struggling what hope is there for the small independent shops?

I know internet shopping has taken over our lives, why not buy sitting at home on the settle with your tablet on your knee? But surely this takes the fun out of looking for and trying on garments.

Go into many town or city centres today and the number of people shopping is low, although there always seems to be plenty feeding their faces in the seemingly endless number of food outlets.

With grandchildren now I looked around for a shop to buy some material for a fancy dress costume. Where have all the shops gone that sell this sort of thing?

Yes Wolverhampton market on a Tuesday has always been great for material but a long trek in a lunch hour. Hopefully when it moves closer to the city centre that will help. The same with food shopping. There are no large food stores in the Mander Centre where you can pick up a shop. Iceland stepped into the breach after Tesco closed and now stocks a wider range admittedly but apart from that, one has to use the bus or car to travel out of the city.

All the major stores now seem to be based on retail parks, very useful as parking is easy. And maybe that is a big part of the problem. I work in the city centre but if not would I actually drive into Wolverhampton and find somewhere to park to do my shopping when many of the things I am looking for are no longer there? I don't think so.

And if I want a coffee – they are expensive – sorry to be mean but I would have one at home before I shop. Yes the internet is great but our town and city centres are slowly dying. Blink and they will be gone. Such a shame.

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Big business destroys towns not homeless

I MUST take issue with Stephen Fellows' recent letter headed 'Time to get tough on homeless', which relates to an issue close to my heart.

My father inherited a thriving newsagents, tobacconist and grocery business in Tipton having returned from France and Germany in 1945. He would start work before 6am, snatching lunch and dinner when he could and closed the shop at 8pm. He would then count the takings and work on the accounts for several hours, working six days per week.

Should not encourage beggars

I SUPPORT Stephen Fellows of Sedgley who stated 'Is it not time that the council and police get tough on the homeless people taking over our doorways and towns?

I counted five allegedly homeless people in Stourbridge complete with their litter of beds spread over the footpath which people had to walk around. On speaking to one I was told if I was not going to give him some money then I could *** off. Another I saw getting into a car to have a smoke.

I take it all these people are on benefits of some sort, so why do they have to downgrade and leave litter in our towns and cities, much to the affront of local people and visitors alike?

Well said Mr Fellows of Sedgley, I willingly give to local charities but never directly to these people as it just encourages begging on our streets.

ALAN THOMAS
Stourbridge

He didn't get a holiday with his family for 15 years. He and mother had four children and two elderly ailing parents to look after.

Self-service stores began to flourish and despite dad's best efforts, the business had to close. Dad wept because he had no money to buy Christmas presents for us.

We lived at the shop, so we could no longer live there. It was only by the grace of a sympathetic councillor that we managed to get a council house, otherwise dad would have become

homeless and the family would have been split up.

This mirrors the decline of the Dudley shopping centre which Stephen Fellows blames on the homeless.

Misfortune can befall anyone, forcing them into poverty and homelessness. It is the greed of the conglomerates and the massive shopping centres that destroy town centres.

The homeless are the victims, not the cause.

MICHAEL CLIFF
Dudley

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

POST

Dudley Chronicle,
Chronicle Editorial,
51-53 Queen Street
Wolverhampton, WV1 1ES

Letters should be brief and MUST include name, address and telephone number. The Editor reserves the right to condense letters.

EMAIL

dudley.chron@expressandstar.co.uk

Code of Practice:

Our policy is to correct errors as soon as we can. The Chronicles adhere to the Editors' Code of Practice, which can be seen at www.ipso.co.uk.

If you are unhappy with the accuracy of a story, write to The Editor, Chronicles, 51-53 Queen Street, Wolverhampton, WV1 1ES.

Town already has at least 11 CCTV cameras

WHY are Halesowen BID and Councillor Bills asking for CCTV cameras in Halesowen Town?

I walked around the town on Tuesday and counted 11 cameras.

Four are on the High St, including one right outside the William Shenstone pub looking at the entrance doors.

Ten of these cameras are 360 degree PTZ (pan, tilt, zoom) and one fixed view at the bus station crossing.

Whilst one does not now expect 24 hour monitoring, they must still be recording and will have a rolling 30 day recording schedule. Can we be assured that these cameras are still working and data from them is recorded?

PETER ASH
Retired CCTV engineer, Halesowen

What'cha Gonna Do About It

I'M a writer and musician, finishing a detailed book about The Small Faces on tour 1965-1969.

I'm looking to speak with fans who remember a gig on March 18, 1967 at The Gaumont in Wolverhampton. On the bill were Roy Orbison, The Small Faces, Paul and Barry Ryan, Sonny Child and TNT, The Settlers and The Robb Storme Group.

There have been some big-hitting musicians involved with interviews so far including Jon Anderson (Yes) Simon Kirke (Free), Arthur Brown and Nick Lowe.

I'm interested to hear of any stories or anecdotes relating to any of the above acts, in particular The Small Faces. Although the event took place over 50 years ago, I'm sure there'll be someone who has a story to tell. Hope you can help.

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Cheryl lost 15 stone but didn't give up curry

AT her heaviest she was tipping the scales at almost 25 stone filling up on piles of cheese and onion sandwiches, takeaways and jars of peanut butter.

Now mother-of-two Cheryl Roberts, from Stourbridge, is half the woman she used to be after losing 15 stone – and all without ditching her beloved curries too.

The 39-year-old Gig Mill Primary School dinner lady decided to start shedding the pounds properly in 2014 joining a slimming group and hitting the gym.

In just four years she now looks a different woman and is down to 10 stone and a dress size 8, or 10 depending on the shop.

It is a far cry from when Cheryl was almost a size 30 and would dread going shopping for clothes at Merry Hill.

In the past the former Ridgewood High School pupil said she used to love filling up on her favourite cheese and onion sandwiches and peanut butter.

And when out drinking she would down pints of cider followed by takeaways late at night.

Curry

But now her diet consists of home-made healthy curries and she has switched from pints of cider to slim-line gin and tonics.

Mrs Roberts said: "For breakfast I would smother peanut butter on four rounds of white bread every morning." "I did used to like going out for a drink but I knew I couldn't carry on drinking eight or nine pints of cider a night."

With the support of her two sons Jack, 15, and Max, 11, Cheryl lost five stone by hitting the gym at the Fitness



Then – Cheryl Roberts used to weigh almost 25 stone



And now – Cheryl has lost 15 stone and looks a different woman

Factory in Wollaston before joining Slimming World in 2014.

She hit double figures in weight loss after being with the Norton group for two years and battling through an underactive thyroid to hit the overall 15 stone loss.

The hard work was recognised when she was nominated as a candidate for Slimming World's Consultant Slimmer of the Year 2018 competition – which

later saw her attend the semi-finals at the club's head office in Derbyshire in February.

Cheryl was presented with a certificate and a glass trophy by Slimming World's CEO Caryl Richards.

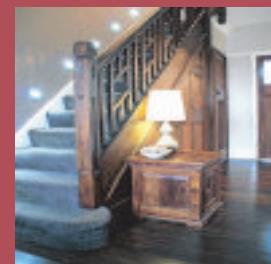
She now supports 45 others on their own weight loss journeys at the Slimming World group in Norton, which she now runs.

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Ten are charged over alleged drone drug smuggling plot

TEN people – including several from the Black Country – have been charged over an alleged plot to smuggle drugs and phones into prisons using drones.

HMP Oakwood and Featherstone near Wolverhampton and HMP Birmingham, known locally as Winson Green Prison, were among those allegedly targeted to fly in contraband.

The eight men and two women have been charged with three counts of conspiracy to supply drugs, psychoactive substances and banned items. It is claimed the group used drones to drop the consignments over prison walls.

All 10 were arrested during raids as part of an investigation by the West Midlands Regional Prison Investigation Team in Birmingham.

Those charged are: Paul Payne, aged 33, of Broad Street, Coseley; Callum McDonough, 25, from Shenley Field Road, Northfield, Birmingham; Shane Hadlington, 29, from Sycamore Lodge, Oldbury; Hannah Williams, 34, from Horton Street, Tipton; Stella Deakin, 40, in Boundary Hill, Dudley; Richard Harrabin, 27, from Perton Grove, Weoley Castle, Birmingham; Jake Blewitt, 20, from Highfield Road, Tipton; Dwayne Tinker, 20, of Lindridge Drive, Minworth, Sutton Coldfield; Ryan Greaves, 21, from Kimberley Walk, Minworth; and Robert Morris, 43, from Sedgley Road West, Tipton.

They are alleged to have been involved in an operation which saw up to 90 consignments of drugs, plus phones and SIM cards dropped over prison walls between April 2016 and June last year.

Prisons targeted were HMP Birmingham in Winson Green; HMP Oakwood and Featherstone; Worcestershire's HMP Hewell; HMP Risley in Warrington; HMP Wymott in Lancashire and HMP Liverpool.

The press was made in 1926 by well-known Black Country engineers Higgins and Son of Lye. Weighing more than four tons, it is described as very impressive when running.

There has been a forge on the site since before 1800. The forge made hand tools such as spades and forks and ladles and was in use until 1969.

Today it is a small industrial museum.

There are also two working water-wheels, both 17 foot in diameter, from the 1800s. Visit churchillforge.org.uk for more information.

AN historic watermill near Stourbridge is opening for the first time this year.

Churchill Forge at the village of Churchill, near Hagley, will open on Easter Monday.

New for this year is the forge press, which will be demonstrated throughout the afternoon between 2pm and 5pm.

The press was made in 1926 by well-known Black Country engineers Higgins and Son of Lye. Weighing more than four tons, it is described as very impressive when running.

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Land swap for museum car park plan

A NEW car park will be built at the Black Country Living Museum as part of its bid to attract thousands more visitors.

Extra spaces will be created at the attraction on Tipton Road following a land swap deal with Dudley Council.

Museum bosses have been keen to free up more room in order to provide extra space for vehicles at the popular attraction, which is set for major growth over the next decade as it adds a 1960s zone to its Victorian and 1930s attractions.

Council bosses have agreed in principle to hand over the land to allow the car park to go ahead and it was due to be approved yesterday (Wednesday).

In return, the museum will give the council a 1.5 acre patch of land it owns near to the recently approved Very Light Rail development and close to where the extension to the Metro line from Wednesbury to Brierley Hill will run.

The Black Country Living Museum is hoping to attract an extra 200,000 visitors a year once its expansion is complete.

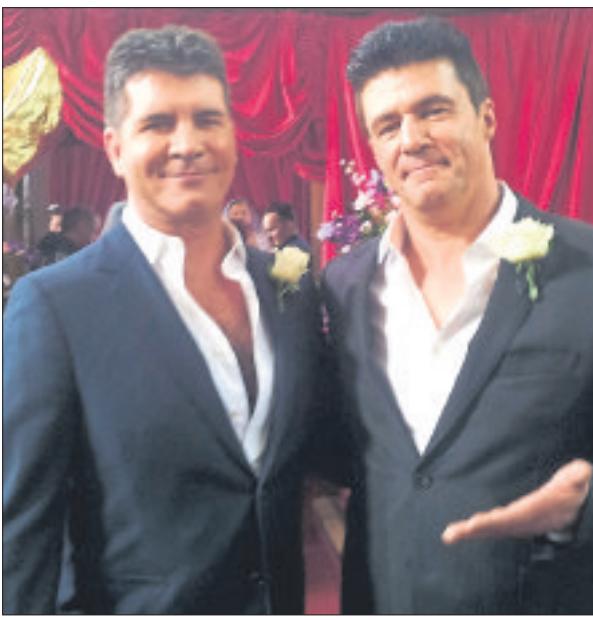
The £10 million project will see the museum grow in size by about a third and involve the creation of a new post-war town. Several iconic buildings, including the old West Bromwich Gas Showroom and Dudley's Woodside Library, are being rebuilt there.

TV expert is to give talk about wildlife

A TV wildlife expert is to give a talk in South Staffordshire later this month.

Kate MacRae, who has appeared on Countryfile, Springwatch and Autumnwatch, will give a talk entitled Create Springwatch in your Garden on March 29 at 7.30pm at Wombourne Community Centre, hosted by Staffordshire Wildlife Trust. Admission is £2.

It's a yes from me – Andy gets approval



Which is which? – Simon Cowell and Dudley's Andy Monk have met

A GRANDFATHER who has been regularly mistaken for Simon Cowell for the past 16 years admits he is asked for selfies and autographs on a daily basis.

Andy Monk, aged 59, has been confused with the famous music mogul and TV talent judge since 2002, when Cowell first gained fame for his appearances on Pop Idol.

Since then, Andy is taken for the star on a daily basis with 'fans' stopping him for selfies and autographs wherever he goes.

Even his grandson, William, aged four, shouts 'grandad' at the television when Cowell is seen on Britain's Got Talent. Andy admits he now goes along with it so people are not disappointed.

Andy, from Dudley, said: "For over 10 years now I've been mistaken for Simon, but I never saw it at first. It started because my friends would always comment that I looked like Simon, but now I get it from strangers every day. Every time I go shopping I get stopped by people and even if it's not for a photo or an autograph, I get whispers of 'oh look, it's Simon Cowell'."

"One of the times I met Simon he gave me the '100 per cent approval', so that really boosted my confidence."

The part-time DJ has attended multiple events as a Simon Cowell lookalike and even met his wife Rose Cook Monk, 48, when she was acting as a Debbie Harry tribute.

See old forge press running as mill opens

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Jacky Standish



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Looking younger than her 57 years, Jacky has recently drawn up an unusual "bucket list", though she's quick to point out: "I'm not dying."

For Jacky, who was so ashamed of her teeth she walked her dog at 5am to avoid meeting people, clever dentistry at North Street has marked a new life chapter, punctuated with a list of the all places she's only dreamed of dining.

The former chef and house manager at Hagley Hall has undergone a major transformation after gum disease ruined her smile, confidence and her ability to chew properly.

Now, with four implants retaining an upper overdenture and a partial lower traditional prosthetic, she's thrilled with her new look. "My jaw is sore from smiling so much. No-one would ever know they are not my natural teeth," she says.

WHEN Theresa Reardon from London set out to fix a longstanding dental problem she never imagined it would take a lifetime's search before finding the answer in Dudley.

Even a trip as a dental tourist to Budapest failed to help the 82-year-old.

After a lifetime of denture troubles, it was during a visit to a friend at Wolverhampton she found fresh hope in a newspaper article. For eight years the former Queen's Household domestic kept the cutting about the work of Steven Burchell Dip CDT RCS Eng GDC108353.

"I read it over and over again, then one day booked an appointment," she recalls.

"I could never bite an apple – the bottom denture was all over the place – but the day I had my new dentures I went out and had a steak. Steven has done for me what no other dentist has. It's been a long time coming, I'm so grateful that I don't have to put my hand over my mouth any more."

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Restaurants and shops go to auction

A FORMER Indian restaurant in Stourbridge is being sold at auction, among several Black Country business properties.

The old Monsoon Bengal Cuisine premises in Lawnswood Road, Wordsley, is laid out to provide 48 covers. It is described as on the first floor having potential for conversion to a self-contained flat, subject to planning permission.

The property has a guide price in excess of £100,000 in SDL Auctions Bigwood's next auction at Aston Villa's Villa Park ground on March 28.

A Stourbridge development site, which already has planning permission for two alternative developments, is another one of the lots. The land at 101 Birmingham Street offers a freehold development opportunity on a site of around 0.78 acres. The planning permissions relate to a development of restaurants, hot-food takeaways or other retail uses with nine apartments above and the other three units for food or retail purposes. The L-shaped site fronts on to Birmingham Street and is next to the River Stour. It has a guide of more than £500,000.

In Brierley Hill, 52 High Street is a prominent freehold town centre retail unit, which currently operates as a cafe trading as Jenny's. It has a guide price of £100,000.

It's not unusual to enjoy Kenny's show



Kenny Craig entertains the 50+ club at Wall Heath including, from left, Liz Austin, Colin Storey, Norma Beal and Marlene Penn

BLACK Country entertainer Kenny Craig took to the Wall Heath Community Centre to give the monthly 50 plus club a special show featuring the songs of Elvis Presley and Tom Jones – after meeting the latter superstar.

Professional entertainer Kenny Craig, from Sedgley, said: "I think Tom Jones is just a great vocalist and he is 77 years old. I met him at Beacon Radio in Wolverhampton once when he had got his new single at the time, Boy From Nowhere, out."

"The group have their meetings every second Wednesday and they do things for the community. They saw me at The Lodge in Dudley and then the community centre asked me if I could do their annual show at Wall Heath."

The singer's performance went down a treat with those who run the club. A total of 37 members of the club, which has been running for around 11 years, turned up to see Kenny Craig after his Christmas show was cancelled due to poor weather conditions.

Social secretary and treasurer Jan Storey said: "He got the members of the club up and dancing."

Call to shut stores in honour of the fallen

SHOPS across the UK should be closed for an extra hour on Remembrance Sunday to commemorate 100 years since the First World War ended, according to a group of MPs.

Labour MP John Spellar has supported a Parliamentary motion on the issue and says such a move would allow shop staff to attend memorial events on November 11.

Commemorations have been organised throughout 2018 to mark the final year of the First World War. More than 800,000 British and Commonwealth soldiers died during the four-year conflict.

Mr Spellar, MP for Warley, said: "The 100th anniversary of the end of the First World War is a special occasion. It is only right that shop workers should be able to attend local memorial events." So far 45 MPs have supported the early day motion, including Walsall South MP Valerie Vaz. Another motion has been submitted by Labour MP Kate Hoey, who wants to see shops close for the entire day.

Two hours free parking aims to boost shops in town centres

SHOPPERS across Dudley could get two hours of free parking in town centres.

Dudley Council's cabinet was last night (Wednesday) expected to pass a proposal which would see the current offer of one hour free parking across council-owned car parks in Dudley doubled.

The anticipated move has been

hailed by Dudley Council leader Patrick Harley, who said: "People have told us that two hours of free parking will make a considerable difference and we are looking forward to rolling this out across the borough from the start of next month."

"This move will provide a huge boost to retailers. Dudley is the only council across the whole of the West Midlands providing this incentive and

is bucking the national trend, which has seen many local authorities increase car parking charges, using the motorist as a cash cow."

Councillor Karen Shakespeare, cabinet member for environmental services, said: "Again we are listening to what the people of Dudley borough have to say and we are extending the free parking to two hours to give shoppers longer in our town centres."

Sir Lenny leads Let's Play drama initiative

SIR Lenny Henry has launched an initiative aimed at encouraging schoolchildren to get involved in drama and the theatre.

The Dudley-born actor and comedian marked the start of Let's Play, which is a scheme by the National Theatre.

He voiced his support for the programme aiming to get children involved in all aspects of theatre production. It will commission new plays with songs and music for children and will provide teachers with training and development.

Sir Lenny made his National Theatre debut in 2011 in Shakespeare's The Comedy of Errors and is now a member of the National Theatre's board of trustees.

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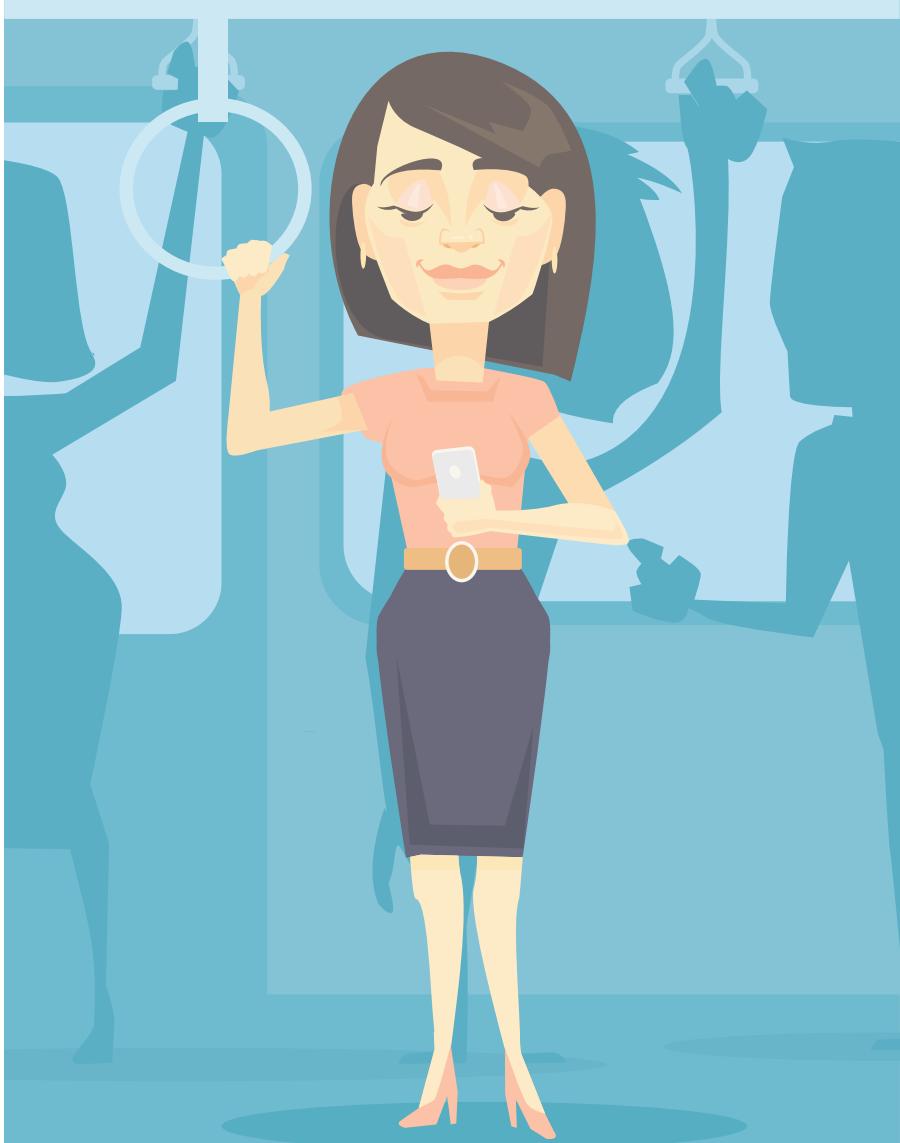
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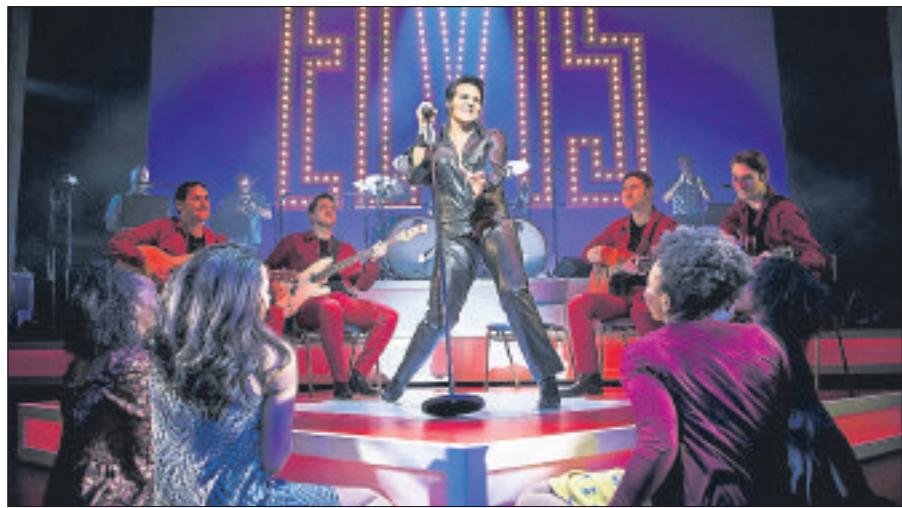


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Just can't help believing Steve is a little Elvish



All Shook Up – Steve Michaels as the King of Rock 'n' Roll in This is Elvis. Picture by Pamela Raith

THIS is NOT Elvis. Yes he's got the look, he's got the moves and the voice. But this is not Elvis – though he comes pretty darn close!

In fact, during a particularly powerful rendition of In the Ghetto I closed my eyes for a moment and Elvis could actually have been in the building.

Canadian Steve Michaels is an award-winning tribute artist and his passion for The King has seen him perform with Presley's bandmates DJ Fontana and Jerry Scheff as well as the Jordanaires and the Sweet Inspirations.

So with the spirit of Elvis coursing through his veins, Michael was a

This Is Elvis
New Alexandra Theatre, B'ham
By Diane Davies

biggest hits. The tempo is stepped right up from the off with That's All Right Mama, Viva Las Vegas and Blue Suede Shoes.

In the Ghetto is followed by You've Lost That Lovin' Feeling and Are You Lonesome Tonight but he is soon rocking again with King Creole and an energetic Burning Love.

Fans of the King will, of course, love this live show, but there is not really enough of his story to satisfy non-Elvis fans. Runs at the New Alexandra Theatre until Saturday.

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Big day at the palace for former Mayor of Dudley

FOR years he has been dedicated to serving his community and now Councillor Steve Walther has been royally honoured for his tireless campaign of work in the Dudley borough with an MBE.

The 62-year-old, who represents St Thomas's ward, picked up the royal accolade from Prince Charles for services to local government and the community at Buckingham Palace on Thursday. Mr Walther, from Kingswinford, said: "It was a great experience I have to say."

"It was something that was never expected and a really lovely experience for me and the family on the day."

"I did not get over excited about - I am too old for that now I think. It really was an honour to receive it."

Amazing

"It is amazing the way the thing is put together because it is done with military precision."

Despite the trip to Buckingham Palace, the former mayor of Dudley has been determined not to let the award go to his head and has been back out in 'the real world' canvassing to maintain his seat.

Mr Walther said: "The first thing Prince Charles said was 'when were you mayor of Dudley' and I thought how does he remember that?"

"I said 'a couple of years ago' and he then asked 'are you still a councillor' - he was very knowledgeable. I told him I was actually up for grabs this May."

"My dear wife Jayne went with me and my dear sister Alison - who was delighted about it all - and my eldest



Councillor Walther receives his royal accolade from Prince Charles and a brief chat son, Jay. The award is sat very proudly in our little display cupboard in our lounge at the moment. My wife said you can't get used to this can you?"

"The only time I felt a little bit nervous was the final bit and waiting in the queue. You think 'It is nearly my turn and I hope nothing goes wrong or I don't fall over or anything'.

"It was just a very interesting experience and I am just glad my family got the chance to sample that as well with me."

Wife Jayne took to social media to celebrate her husband's success.

She shared news of the London visit on Facebook, with swarms of well-wishers.

She said: "Proud, proud, proud of this wonderful, amazing man. The Black Country came to Buckingham Palace."

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Looking out for early signs of glaucoma

LIZ CONNOR speaks to optometrist Dr Josie Forte about the UK's biggest cause of irreversible blindness

GOING blind is a frightening thought, yet many of us know very little about glaucoma.

Known as "the silent thief of sight", the condition currently affects as many as 700,000 people across the UK, with some 50 per cent of cases remaining undiagnosed.

Glaucoma is a pretty common eye condition – it's thought that by 2035, one million people will suffer from it – and usually occurs when the optic nerve, which connects the eye to the brain, becomes damaged as a result of fluid building up in the front area of the eye, which in turn increases pressure within the eyeball.

If left unchecked, it can cause irreversible damage to vision, so it's important to diagnose and treat glaucoma early. The only way to do this is to go for frequent eye checks, otherwise you could be risking your sight without knowing it.

Almost 80 per cent of people would choose sight as the sense they would least like to lose, yet many don't visit the optician until something goes wrong with their eyes or sight.

Here, Specsavers optometrist, Dr Josie Forte, shares seven little-known facts about glaucoma...

GLAUCOMA CAN BE SYMPTOMLESS

People with 20/20 vision can have glaucoma and not realise it. You may not notice any difference in your vision, because it tends to affect your peripheral vision first – which you may not even be aware of. It's only when it progresses to moderate or advanced glaucoma that people start to notice changes to their vision quality. "Regular eye tests are so important," says Dr Forte, "as they potentially enable a diagnosis before any noticeable visual loss has occurred."

YOUR FAMILY HISTORY COULD AFFECT YOUR RISK OF DEVELOPING IT

"Age, family history and even ethnicity all play a role," explains Dr Forte. "If you're over 40, have a family history of glaucoma, are short-sighted or diabetic, you have a higher risk of glaucoma and should mention this at your next sight test."

PEOPLE OF AFRICAN, CARIBBEAN OR ASIAN ORIGIN ARE AT A HIGHER RISK

It's often unclear why a build-up of pressure in the eye happens, but research has found that ethnicity can increase or decrease the risk, with glaucoma more common in people of African, Caribbean or Asian origin.

EYE TESTS ARE QUICK AND PAINLESS

Glaucoma can usually be detected during a routine eye test, often before it causes any noticeable symptoms. The test does not hurt or feel uncomfortable, and should only take around 15 minutes.

"Tests involve the optometrist looking at the appearance of the main nerve in the eye, a measurement of the pressure in the eye, and checking the field of vision," says Dr Forte.

GLAUCOMA CAN AFFECT ANYONE AT ANY AGE

"It is not an age-related sight loss condition," says Dr Forte. "Primary open angle glaucoma becomes more common as you get older, and although uncommon below the age of 40, it's important to get checked for the early signs."

GLAUCOMA CAN BE MANAGED

It's not possible to reverse any loss of vision that occurred before glaucoma was diagnosed, but treatment can help to stop any further visual impairment. Regardless of whether somebody with glaucoma has noticed damage to their vision or not, the condition can often be managed with specific eye drops. "These are normally prescribed by an ophthalmologist at an eye hospital," explains Dr Forte, "commonly after referral by an optometrist."

THE NHS FUNDS SIGHT TESTS FOR GLAUCOMA AT-RISK GROUPS

"If a close relative has glaucoma, you have a greater risk of developing it," stresses Josie, "so your routine eye test may be funded by the NHS. If you think you might qualify, speak to your optician for more information."



Depression is treatable and adults can provide plenty of support for children



Some 20 per cent of adolescents experience a mental health problem in any given year

Support for youngsters with mental health issues

Report by Liz Connor

STRESS, ANXIETY AND DEPRESSION CAN BE TOUGH ENOUGH FOR ANYONE TO DEAL WITH, BUT COUPLE THAT WITH THE HORMONAL CHANGES THAT TEENAGERS FACE DURING PUBERTY, AND MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES CAN FEEL LIKE AN OVERWHELMING AND UNCONQUERABLE BURDEN.

For parents, it isn't always easy to differentiate between 'normal' teenage angst and a more serious problem, but research suggests 20 per cent of adolescents experience a mental health problem in any given year.

Fear of being mocked or not being taken seriously, or a simple confusion about the changes they're experiencing, can often stop young people from reaching out for help – which is why it's vital parents understand how to best to spot the signs of depression in teens, and what to do if this happens.

Fortunately, depression is treatable and there are plenty of things adults can do to support their children through the process.

Here, Dr Hayley van Zwanenberg, a child and adolescent psychiatrist for Priory Healthcare, explains more about the early warning signs of teenage depression, and how parents can help.

SPOTTING THE SIGNS

While occasional mood swings or acting out is part of growing up, depression is something different, explains Dr Zwanenberg. "Look out for a teenager that isolates themselves from friends and family, and a constant low mood and lack of energy that may manifest in struggling to do anything other than the minimum they have to do every day," she says.

"Also, be aware of loss of motivation, such as abandoning extra-curricular activities and hobbies, and negative thoughts like: 'I'm a boring person and rubbish at everything'."

Dr Zwanenberg explains that some depressed teens may also show signs of self-harm, changes in appetite (either not hungry or comfort-eating) and poor concentration, leading to a decrease in academic performance.

Listen, listen, listen (and don't judge)

If your teen starts talking to you about how they are feeling, make an effort to really listen to them without being overbearing in your concern. "If a parent is worried about a young person, it's best to sit down calmly with them and explain they are worried, as they do not seem themselves," says Dr Zwanenberg.

"Parents and carers need to be careful that the young person does not take this as criticism, as depression can often feel like carrying a sieve in your mind: any positive information is washed down



It's vital parents understand how to best to spot the signs of depression in teens, and what to do if this happens

the sink, while anything negative is caught and focused on, reinforcing other pessimistic thoughts."

HELP IN A WAY THAT THEY ARE COMFORTABLE WITH

Often, the most helpful thing you can do is ask your child what they think might help them feel better. It's also important to contextualise the issue for them too, as they might not understand the feelings for what they really are, or feel like they are going 'mad' because they don't have any background knowledge of depression.

"If your teenager is struggling, calmly explain to them they might be depressed, and that the issue is treatable, but that you understand it is a horrible place to be when you are suffering with it," says Dr Zwanenberg.

"Reassure them with statistics, such as the fact that one in 10 young people have a diagnosable mental illness at any one time, and depression is very common," she adds.

"Explain that if they see a GP, the doctor

does not have to share everything with the parent, and that the discussions can be kept confidential."

Remind them you are willing to listen too, and that you will not get upset, be overbearing in your advice or dismiss their feelings.

REDUCE RISKS

If a child is displaying signs of self-harm or suicidal thoughts, Dr Zwanenberg stresses that you should urge them to telephone a helpline, such as Samaritans or ChildLine, and to ask them to share their thoughts with you in a manner they feel comfortable with, so that you can help keep them safe.

"They could text them to you, write their thoughts down, or talk to you about them when feeling calm," says Dr Zwanenberg.

"Things that parents can do to reduce risk include locking away any potentially harmful substances and asking the young person what websites they are accessing online. You should then talk through whether these resources are really helpful to them or not."

"Ask them how they would like you to support them," she adds. "It might be they

just want hugs, they want distraction such as watching a film with you or not to be left alone at night-time.

They might find it helpful to have useful mindfulness apps, such as Headspace (headspace.com) or Calm Harm (stem4.org)."

STAY CALM

Dr Zwanenberg says the most important thing you can do as a parent is to stay calm. "If you need to discuss what they tell you with another family member or friend for your own support, ensure the young person does not feel their confidence is being broken," she says. "Most importantly, seek professional help for your child. Depression is a very difficult illness that causes risks to the young person, but it is treatable, and the earlier treatment is accessed, the better."

If you're concerned about a teenager, charities like Young Minds (youngminds.org.uk) and Mind (mind.org.uk) can offer support and advice. Samaritans provides confidential support and are on 116 123, or email jo@samaritans.org

Final blow for Hippodrome campaign

CAMPAIGNERS fighting to save Dudley Hippodrome have had their last ditch hopes of reviving the former venue quashed.

Council bosses agreed to take the landmark on Castle Hill back into their possession from Black Country Hippodrome group after ruling that a five-year lease was unworkable.

Dudley Council's cabinet voted in favour of retaining the building, which needs to have asbestos removed, after claiming the group which signed the lease in December 2016 failed to hit targets.

The decision made was 'called-in' to the council's overview and scrutiny board with campaigners hoping it would be referred back to the cabinet.

The Black Country Hippodrome dream has evaporated, after councillors agreed to take back control of the former theatre and bingo hall.

Gordon Downing, who represented the Black Country Hippodrome group, said: "The council has been dead against it right from the word go. I'm not saying individual councillors but the council in general since we started six years ago."

"Every obstacle has been put in our way."

Strategic director for Dudley Council, Alan Lunt, said: "I think what the group has done they should be proud of. But unfortunately, it has failed."

Choirs join forces for concert to help hospice

A CHOIR will be joined by three guest vocal groups for its 21st anniversary charity concert in Dudley.

Voices in Harmony from Cradley Heath will be singing in Dudley Town Hall on May 12 at 7pm with Viva Musica, Gentlemen Songsters and Colla Voce in a concert compered by TV personality Don Maclean. It is raising money for Mary Stevens Hospice.

Residents are determined to resist travellers camp

Statue of hero to be cast in bronze



Dudley North MP Ian Austin is seen admiring the clay version of the Frank Foley statue with sculptor Andy de Comyn

THE final stages of work on a bronze statue of anti-Nazi hero Frank Foley has begun.

Artist Andy de Comyn has completed a full stage clay model of the 'British Schindler', who repeatedly risked his life to save Jews in 1930s Nazi Germany when working for

the British Government. The model, which depicts Major Foley seated on a park bench, will be cast in bronze.

The statue is set to take pride of place in Mary Stevens Park, near Major Foley's former home in Eveson Road, Norton.

Dudley North MP Ian Austin, who

led the campaign for the tribute, said: "I am delighted at the progress of the statue. The final piece should be ready by the summer so people can learn about Major Foley and our country's role in fighting for freedom, democracy and tolerance against Nazi Germany. I can't wait until the statue is unveiled."

RESIDENTS have vowed to conduct their own contamination checks on a controversial site where a travellers camp is planned.

Around 50 people gathered at the Apple Tree Inn in Coseley to voice their concerns over Dudley Council's plan to create a temporary travellers transit site in Dudley borough, so the authority has more power to halt unauthorised camps.

Proposals for the site in Budden Road were approved last month by the council's planning committee and the results of a public consultation, which runs until Saturday, will give the community the chance to have their say.

Resident Tony Sheldon, 70, said: "We are going to do our own test on the site to check for contamination. We're prepared to do anything to stop it. We will fund it ourselves if we have to."

Protesters have previously raised concerns over the safety of the site, which has been recorded as containing foundry and construction waste.

Cheaper

Mr Sheldon said: "When you stop and look at the sites that were suggested, how they came up with this as the preferred site I have no idea. There are more appropriate and cheaper sites to convert. What really gets me is the fact that they couldn't afford to refurbish the site a few years ago."

The issue was discussed for more than two hours by residents at the meeting.

Mr Sheldon added: "It's been said the site must not be near residents' properties but it's right at the back of people's houses."

"There will be a 10 per cent depreciation in house prices because of the site and house insurance will also be higher."

Call for tough action over bet terminals

WEST Bromwich East MP Tom Watson has accused the Gambling Commission of 'passing the buck' over plans to cut stakes for fixed odds betting terminals.

The commission says the maximum stake for such terminals, should £30 or less. Currently people can bet up to £100 every 20 seconds on electronic casino games, such as roulette and blackjack. But Labour's deputy leader said the recommendation, which follows a Government consultation, does not go far enough. He has called for the maximum stake on electronic casino games to be slashed to £2.

Mr Watson said: "It simply passes the buck to ministers. If we are to tackle the hidden epidemic of gambling addiction in this country, we need decisive action. We need to reduce the maximum stake on electronic casino games like roulette to £2, and introduce slower spin times."

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Meghan leads way with love of peonies

PUNDITS have been predicting that peonies may feature in Meghan Markle's wedding bouquet, so enamoured is she with these saucer-sized romantic blooms.

In the early days of dating Prince Harry, she posted a picture of a beautiful pink and white spray of peonies on Instagram, with the caption: "Swooning Over These. #London #peonies #spoiledrotten".

You too could have peonies flowering in your garden come early summer, and some will be at their best around the time of the royal wedding in May.

Their blousy blooms, in shades from deep red to white and everything in-between, add a touch of glamour to borders and, if you can bear it, you can cut them and bring them indoors.

HOW EASY ARE THEY TO GROW?

Pretty easy, in the right conditions. The pot-grown peonies you find in garden centres can be planted at any time of year, while bare-rooted types are ideally planted in October.

They prefer heavier soil in a sunny or slightly shaded spot, and add plenty of organic matter to the planting hole before you start. Don't let them get waterlogged, though. Add horticultural grit if the soil is extremely heavy.

Don't plant them too deeply – the soil should just cover the topmost tuberous roots. Mulch them lightly in February or March with potash-rich wood ash to increase flower production. If you want huge flowers (but less of them), debud the sideshoots in April or May with a sharp knife.

WILL THEY FLOWER THE FIRST YEAR?

You might be lucky, but peonies don't like being moved or replanted, so it may take a year or two for them to settle in before flowering. If you are transplanting existing plants, do it in early autumn or spring, keeping the rootball as intact as possible.

HOW LONG WILL THE FLOWERS LAST?

That largely depends on the weather. Vast bowls of petals emerge from thick stalks above the pretty foliage in late spring and early summer, which will need supporting with a stake or frame to stop them falling over in the wind.

The flowers of herbaceous peonies are short-lived, lasting little more than a week or two, and if it rains they won't last that long, as wet weather tends to make them flop, particularly the heavy, double-flowered forms.

ANY RECOMMENDED VARIETIES?

If you want huge pink fragrant double flowers, try *Paeonia lactiflora "Sarah Bernhardt"*, which is favoured by commercial cut flower producers. Familiar favourites include *P. officinalis "Rubra Plena"*, a deep red, frilly double cottage variety, or if you want a larger tree peony, growing up to 2.5m, consider *P. ludlowii*, which bears zingy yellow saucer-shaped flowers.

For a longer flowering period go for "Bowl Of Beauty", a Japanese type which flowers for almost twice as long as the others and has a fantastic fragrance, growing to about 90cm, so it will need staking.

ANY RULES FOR CUTTING?

Don't cut stems in their first year of planting. Leave the plant to strengthen a bit and you'll have more blooms to cut the following year. Always leave at least a third of the stems on each plant, which will help it gather strength and feed the root through summer and early autumn.

INDOOR TIPS

Acclaimed floral designer Judith Blacklock, founder of The Judith Blacklock Flower School (judithblacklock.com) in London, explains: "You must cut peonies in bud but there must be some colour showing in the bud or it won't open."

She recommends pairing peonies in arrangements with astrantia and Alchemilla mollis.

Peonies are thirsty cut flowers, so fill up your vase every day with fresh water and they should last about a week. Snip off the base of the stems every couple of days to help them last a little longer.

"Remove the lower foliage but don't discard it as you can mass the leaves together and they will look gorgeous," Blacklock adds. "The cooler the atmosphere inside, the longer the flowers will last."



Do your research before changing energy supplier



The Beast from the East left an unwelcome surprise – higher energy bills

AFTER the Beast from the East came the big thaw and then the fear of gas shortages.

Now there is the shock of energy bill increases for householders with prices hitting record highs.

As residents turned up their heating to beat the cold the price of imported gas through pipelines from the continent rose to more than six times usual levels. "That will obviously have a knock-on effect on customers, particularly those on variable rate tariffs," said green energy expert Ron Fox.

But he warned people not to rush in and swap suppliers, even though Eon and Bulb have already passed on the higher costs with bigger consumer bills.

He said they should research carefully if they were switching to one of the newer and smaller suppliers after a warning that some could go under because of rising costs and a lack of investment.

Already Future Energy with about 10,000 customers went bust last month. Though the energy regulator Ofgem will automatically transfer people to another provider if a firm fails, bills could still go up.

Ofgem said more than five million customers swapped supplier last year and more than half of those went to smaller companies.

Those who switched from a variable rate tariff to a fixed rate deal would have saved around £376 a year.

Mr Fox, of Noreus Ltd, said firstly, people should enter the tariff and energy usage from their most

recent bill on a price comparison website which will suggest the cheapest supplier.

But he advises people thinking of moving to a new small provider to then look at three areas.

He said: "Beware of companies who ask you to pay up front for a better deal, they may not have a big enough cash reserve. Secondly, if this provider has a poor customer service record it may be struggling with rapid expansion. Finally, make sure the company gives both value for money and has a good trading record."

If they are happy then people can organise the switch online and it should be completed within weeks with no interruption to supply.

Meanwhile, for those looking for even more freedom from rising electricity and heating costs, Mr Fox recommends looking at renewable alternatives.

These include rooftop solar photovoltaic panels, which change energy from the sun into domestic electricity, and air source heat pumps, which work by absorbing heat from the atmosphere and converting this into power for the home.

An added bonus is that any surplus energy not used by the solar PV panels can be sold back to the National Grid, said Mr Fox.

Also the price of installing the panel has fallen dramatically over the last few years, so the initial outlay is recovered more quickly.

A good time to bring in fish – but avoid pitfalls

Report by Hannah Stephenson

HOPEFULLY the ice on your pond should now have melted, so it may soon be time to think about stocking it with suitable fish.

The best time to buy them is when the water temperature is rising and has reached about 10C (50F) – but which are the best buys?

Here's what you need to know...

CHOOSE A SUITABLE FISH

Among the most popular, exotic and expensive are koi carp, which are classified by scale types, patterns and colours. But be warned, if you want to keep koi well, your pond must be large and deep, with crystal clear water. Koi and other carp can grow to 75cm or more and some are worth thousands of pounds, so you may want to consider how secure the pond is before splashing out.

A less adventurous option is the common goldfish, which is easily bred and generally no longer than 15cm, ideal for most ponds, and will tolerate water as warm as 35C (95F), although not for long periods.

There are also fancy types of goldfish with enlarged heads and big, bubble-eyes, but many don't tolerate extremes in temperature, such as freezing weather or prolonged periods of heat.

Orfe, rudd and roach are also popular choices, although as many spend a lot of their time near the surface, you may need to protect your pond with netting to stop cats and herons from taking them.

Go to a reputable supplier who will allow you to examine and pick out your fish. The healthiest ones should have bright eyes and a sturdy body, with a stout dorsal fin. Fish with missing or damaged scales are best avoided, as the exposed tissue beneath the scales may be prone to fungal infection. But do remember not to mix exotic with native species, or you'll have a fight on your hands. Sticklebacks, for instance, will eat even goldfish eggs as it's laid.

KEEP YOUR POND HEALTHY

Whichever fish you choose, the general rule for keeping them healthy is to have well-oxygenated water, varying depths, and sufficient food, shade and shelter. Get plants established and make sure the water is clear before you introduce the fish. A well-planted pond should ensure goldfish can acquire most of the food they need, although some additional feeding will be necessary.

If you have a wildlife pond, be aware that this is likely to attract other creatures, including predators such as herons and kingfishers, so the fish you choose should match the environment.

In this instance, it may be wise to avoid highly coloured ornamental varieties and go for native species which are cheaper to replace, such as dace, roach and rudd.

REMEMBER THAT FISH CAN BE FUSSY

Some fish don't like clear water – carp



With spring now here, it's the perfect time to start thinking about stocking a pond with fish



Be wary of predators such as kingfishers

will disturb mud at the bottom of a pond to make it murky and camouflage them. And when buying fish, remember that they feed at different water levels. Koi feed at a minimum depth of 3ft (1m), so avoid shallow pools, while orfe are active surface-feeders, which can grow to 45cm or larger and are unsuitable for small ponds.

DON'T OVERFILL THE POND

The number of fish you have in your pond depends on its size. Surface area determines how much oxygen is available to them, so work out how many fish you can accommodate by following this general rule – multiply the average length of the pond by its

average width, to give you the surface area.

Apply a general rule of 1in of fish to each square foot – that's 25cm of fish per square metre. If in doubt, take advice from reputable pond and aquatic centres. It's better to have too few fish than too many.

KEEP THE WATER OXYGENATED

Deep water ponds also retain a more regular temperature and more dissolved oxygen during warm weather. If your fish dart about, it may be that they have become stressed because your pond is too shallow or there are not enough corners for them to hide.

You can keep fish in a pond without

plants, but most gardeners prefer to add some aquatic greenery to make the area seem more natural.

Fish should be fed around twice a day in summer, but don't overfeed them. In winter the feeding can be cut down.

ACCLIMATISE THE FISH

To acclimatise fish to a pond, it's best to buy them small. They are generally transported from aquatic centres in plastic bags. To help them adapt to the lower temperature of the pond, sink the unopened bag into the pond for an hour or so, adding a small amount of pond water, then you can gently open it to release the fish.



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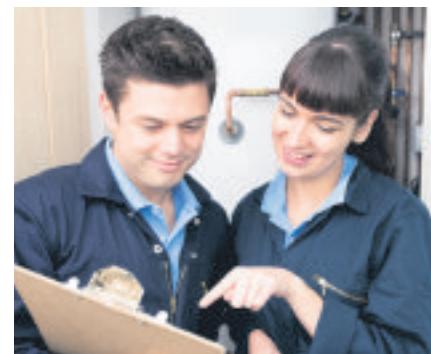
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INSIDE

Offering a warm welcome



Managers Paul and Carol always ensure a warm welcome to customers both old and new at Blackheath's Shoulder of Mutton pub.

For all the sports fans they boast three large TV screens featuring all sports on Sky, BT and all BOX OFFICE Events not to mention AT THE RACES.

For those who like 'doing' rather than 'watching', there is the availability of the pool table and dart board.

Loyalty

The pub itself boasts a wide range of ciders, lagers, wines and spirits including four 'Real Ales' which they rotate weekly. Regulars very often enjoy ales such as Bathams, AJ Ales, Oakham, JHB, Stairway To Heaven and MA Pardoes Entire, plus many more!

The pub also run a loyalty scheme which means customers can get 10p back on their card for every pound they spend. A pub spokesman added: "With a juke box and free WiFi to compliment the regular entertainment every Friday, customers cannot ask for much more from a local pub!"

Lots of exciting upcoming entertainment coming up throughout March. Check out their advert for up to date times and acts coming up.

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Playing for laughs as play went right

A brilliantly funny comedy that will have fans aching with laughter will head to the Birmingham Hippodrome from Tuesday to March 31. The Play That Goes Wrong features the Cornley Polytechnic Drama Society who are putting on a 1920s murder mystery.

As the title suggests, everything that can go wrong... does and as the accident prone thespians battle on against all the odds to reach their final curtain call, hilarious results ensue.

Hailed 'a gut-busting hit' by the New York Times, Mischief Theatre's sell-out West End comedy, which is now playing on Broadway, has won a host of celebrity endorsements from the likes of Joanna Lumley who said: "We laughed until the tears ran down our faces, it has to be seen" to Ant & Dec, who said: "The funniest show we've seen! If you can get a ticket, go!"

The show is returning to Birmingham after a sell-out run last year.

Director Mark Bell created the West End productions of the Olivier Award-winning The Play That Goes Wrong, as well as The Comedy About a Bank Robbery. He originally wanted to be an actor but spent a lot of his career training and teaching the art of clowning and is a virtuoso at shaping comedy.

CHOICE

He was immediately drawn to The Play That Goes Wrong. "It needs to make me laugh, or I can see how it would be funny. Sometimes on the page they don't look like that much, but I was at the very first reading of The Play That Goes Wrong and that was obvious – I could see where they were going to take the characters, playing off their idea of the audience – that was an easy choice.

"I honestly don't know, I don't have a method – you just read it a couple of times and see if you can picture how you would do it. I knew straight away the kind of actors I would want and how I would approach it."

Mark puts in hours and hours during rehearsals to make sure his shows are funny.

"You just don't know – sometimes it's the little innocuous things that you've put in to bridge from one moment to the next suddenly start getting a laugh, and you just wonder why."

"Usually the penny drops and you see why. I don't think anybody can really anticipate where the laughs will land, sometimes it's just a simple movement that an actor does that's funny. I would say about 80 per cent of stuff that we put in rehearsal lands and we don't have to change, and there's always a couple of things that you're sad aren't working and you have to change."

He says the most important thing is that people take their characters seriously, even in shows as silly as The Play That Goes Wrong.

"As the actor playing it,

Playing for laughs – The Play That Went Wrong



you can never show the audience that you find it funny. The character on stage has to be laughed at and not with. Sometimes you get characters who enjoy being laughed at and that's fun for them. For actors I say you have to play it truthfully, like you're playing a dramatic part. Treat it like you're doing a Chekhov play. Comedy isn't easier than dramatic acting, it's ten times as hard. You need the same dramatic truth that you have for the character but in a ridiculously absurd setting, whilst getting your blocking and your timing exactly right, otherwise you don't get the laugh that you need for the show to move on. You've got to be both truthful and a master technician at the same time – and that's hard."

The successful UK production has been described as having sets as shaky as a Conservative immigration manifesto pledge

I don't think anybody can really anticipate where the laughs will land

and a script as tortuous as a Diane Abbott interview. The show originally started in a pub theatre before transferring to the Trafalgar Studios, enjoying a UK tour and an extended run at the Duchess Theatre in the West End.

The writers and creators of the play, Henry Shields, Henry Lewis and Jonathan Sayer, are stunned that they were able to recreate their madcap roles on Broadway.

Henry Shields says: "It's been very positive. We've been overwhelmed as to how supportive American audiences have been."

Henry Lewis adds: "We haven't really changed much, most of the show is performed as it is in London. Over the course of the whole journey of the show lots has changed as it has been performed, but it hasn't changed much for Broadway audiences, just a few terms that aren't used in the USA and making sure that's clear."

● For more entertainment news and reviews see The Ticket in your Express & Star every Friday.

NYC rock trio Sunflower Bean



Traumatic times inspiring for young human Beans

New York trio Sunflower Bean tomorrow (Friday) release their second album, *Twentytwo in Blue*, ahead of a gig at the Hare and Hounds, Kings Heath, on Tuesday.

The album gets its title from the fact that all members of the band – Julia Cumming, Jacob Faber and Nick Kivlen – are 22-years-old.

The album comes just over two years since the release of their critically acclaimed debut album *Human Ceremony*. Since then the band's classic rock inspired sound has matured and gigs supporting Wolf Alice last year have won them new fans in the UK.

Twentytwo in Blue shows Sunflower Bean staying true to their guitar band core, while exploring new sonic textures with more direct and progressive

themes. It showcases how far the band has come since playing together in their high school days.

To celebrate the album Sunflower Bean share a new single, *Crisis Fest*, the follow up to the catchy, almost Fleetwood Mac-like, *I Was a Fool*.

"2017—we know! Reality's one big sick show/ Every day's a crisis fest," vocalist and bassist Julia sings. "Last year was extremely alarming, traumatic, and politically volatile," says the band. "While writing this album, we often reflected back on the people we met while on tour."

"We felt a strong kinship with the audiences that came to see us all over the country, and we wanted to write a song for them – something to capture the anxieties of an uncertain future."

Disney favourites to enchant the ice

From wheels to waves, icy wonderlands to infinity and beyond, dozens of favourite Disney moments will come to life at Disney On Ice presents Worlds of Enchantment.

Eight shows are planned at Birmingham's Genting Arena between Wednesday (March 28) and Sunday (April 1) as the magic of Disney is brought to life by some of the world's best ice skaters.

The latest show is called Worlds of Enchantment and fans can enter the dazzling world of Disney



for non-stop fun with four of their favourite Disney stories.

There will be the high-speed stunts of Lightning McQueen, Mater and the crew of Disney/Pixar's Cars, who will race across the ice like never before.

Fans can dive into adventure with Ariel in The Little Mermaid's enchanted undersea kingdom.

The toys are back in town as Buzz Lightyear, Woody, Jessie and the Toy Story gang escape from the rambunctious tots of Sunnyside Daycare in their most daring adventure ever.

And fans can also enter the wintry world of Arendelle with

sisters Anna and Elsa and pals Olaf and Kristoff from Disney's Frozen, as they learn that true love comes from within.

For tickets visit www.disneyonice.com or call the hotline on 0844 338 0338.

Performance Director for Disney on Ice, former Olympian Jackie Soames, is particularly happy that the world tour is coming to Birmingham as she hails from nearby Nuneaton. She embarked on her remarkable career, both solo and in pairs with John Jenkins, after learning to skate at Solihull Ice Rink at the age of eight.

Q.U.B.E. 2 is top of the blocks puzzler

You don't have to be familiar with the original to enjoy Q.U.B.E. 2, Toxic Games' immersive first person puzzle trek through a futuristic maze of monolith blocks. As Commander Emma Sutcliffe you move blocks and explore as a stranded protagonist with only a colleague on a communicator for help. Exploring and manipulating the environment poses challenges. There is a growing sense of unease. This addictive game is available for Xbox One, Playstation 4 and PC.



Magic night ahead for indie rock fans

GIG highlights include tonight's (Thursday's) sold out show by The Magic Gang at Birmingham's O2 Institute 2 in Digbeth. Check out their slacker pop anthems on their just released debut album. Also tonight, singer, songwriter and frontman of rock band Idlewild, Roddy Woomble, has a gig at the Hare and Hounds in Kings Heath. He won acclaim for latest solo album *The Deluder* and will also be playing some Idlewild songs. Support from Tom Joshua. The Wombats will be playing tracks from fourth album *Beautiful People Will Ruin Your Life* at the O2 Institute tomorrow night, whilst rising star singer-songwriter Tom Walker plays the venue's other room. Claire Hastings, BBC Radio Scotland Young Traditional Musician of the Year, is with Aidan Moodie at Newhampton Arts Centre, Wolverhampton, Saturday.

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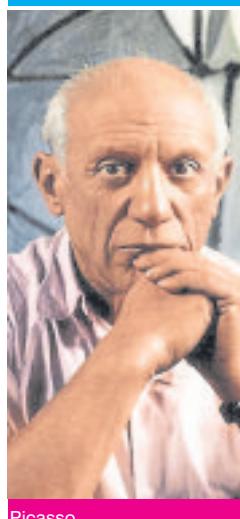
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CHOICE**Picasso****Picasso's Last Stand (BBC2, 9pm)**

Documentary telling the story of the last decade of the great artist's life, through the memories of family, close friends and the people he allowed into his world in the 1960s. As his health declined in these final years, Picasso faced damaging criticism of his work for the first time, and intimate details about his bohemian lifestyle were revealed. Yet, in the midst of disaster, he rediscovered his revolutionary spirit with a creative surge that produced some of his most sexually frank and comic work.

BBC1

6.00 Breakfast, 10.00 Saturday Kitchen Live, 11.30 **Classic Mary Berry**, (R) **12.00 Football Focus, 12.30 BBC News; Weather, 12.45 Film:** *The Pirates! In an Adventure with Scientists!* (2012) Animated comedy, with the voice of Hugh Grant. **2.05 Gymnastics: World Cup Highlights, 3.50 The Boat Race.** Live coverage of the men's and women's University Boat Races.

6.15 Doodlebugs. Sketch show in which inanimate objects share their thoughts on the world. With the voices of Kayvan Novak, Cardinal Burns, Morgana Robinson and Spencer Jones.

6.30 BBC News.

6.40 Regional Programme.

6.45 Pointless Celebrities. A special Grange Hill version of the quiz, featuring Todd Carty, Alison Bettles, Paula Ann Bland, Lee MacDonald, Erkan Mustafa, Michelle Gayle, Francesca Martinez and Stuart Organ.

7.40 Who Dares Wins. Game show in which two pairs of complete strangers team up, each battling to outdo the other by listing as much as they know about a given subject.

8.20 Casualty. The day of Robyn and Glen's wedding arrives, but the groom has a seizure while getting ready at the hotel. Rash treats a woman suffering from anxiety after the death of her fiance.

9.10 Troy Fall of a City. The Trojan royal family receive a message from the gods and embark on a daring raid with their newfound allies. Achilles is provoked into returning to battle Hector, while Helen's situation remains precarious. The sixth episode of David Farr's Ancient Greek historical drama based on the Trojan War and the love affair between Paris and Helen, starring Tom Weston-Jones, Louis Hunter, Jonas Armstrong, Bella Dayne, David Threlfall, Johnny Harris, Chloe Pirrie and Joseph Mawle.

10.10 BBC News; Weather, National Lottery Update.

10.30 Film: Guardians of the Galaxy. (2014) A band of escapees from a prison space station battles an alien warlord for possession of a powerful artefact. Sci-fi adventure, starring Chris Pratt.

12.25 Weather for the Week Ahead.

12.30 BBC News.

BBC2

6.10 The Wonder of Animals, (R) 6.40 Naomi's Nightmares of Nature, (R) 7.10 The Pets Factor, 7.30 The Deneingers, 8.00 Absolute Genius: Monster Builds, 8.30 Beyond Bionic, 9.00 Robot Wars, (R) 10.00 Gordon Buchanan: Elephant Family & Me, (R) 11.00 Famously Unfit for Sport Relief, (R) 12.00 Homes Under the Hammer, (R) 12.45 Escape to the Country, (R) 1.30 Planet Earth, (R) 2.30 Me and My Dog: The Ultimate Contest, (R) 3.30 The Repair Shop, (R) 4.00 The Secret Helpers, (R) 5.00 Big Cats About the House, (R)

6.00 Hugh's Wild West. Hugh Fearnley-Whittingstall celebrates volunteers who help wildlife in the West Country, meeting a woman who has transformed her home into a hedgehog hospital. Last in the series.

7.00 Amazing Hotels: Life Beyond the Lobby. Giles Coren and Monica Galetti work in Ireland's Ashford Castle, dating back to 1228. Despite its rollercoaster ride through the ages Ashford has sustained strong community ties. (R)

8.00 David Attenborough's Natural Curiosities. The evolutionary documentary concludes, as David Attenborough profiles the Siamese fighting fish and the kangaroo, which has a kick so strong it can kill. Last in the series.

8.30 Dad's Army. The platoon takes part in an efficiency test in a bid to prove its worth, but mistakenly attacks a tea lady with onions from Jones's van. Guest starring Fulton Mackay, (R)

9.00 Picasso's Last Stand. Documentary telling the story of the last decade of the great artist's life, through the memories of family, close friends and the people he allowed into his world in the 1960s.

10.00 Film: A Late Quartet. (2012) A member of a string quartet announces his retirement, bringing up personal conflicts among the other musicians. Drama, with Christopher Walken and Philip Seymour Hoffman.

11.40 Film: Safe Haven. (2013) A woman trying to make a fresh start in a coastal town realises she must confront the dark past she is running from. Romantic drama, with Julianne Hough.

10.30 Film: Guardians of the Galaxy. (2014) A band of escapees from a prison space station battles an alien warlord for possession of a powerful artefact. Sci-fi adventure, starring Chris Pratt.

2.30 (BST) Civilisations. (R) **3.30 This Is BBC Two.**

ITV

6.00 CITV: Sooty, 6.10 Grizzly Tales for Gruesome Kids, (R) 6.20 Grizzly Tales for Gruesome Kids, (R) 6.35 Dino Dan: Trek's Adventures, (R) 6.50 Super 4, (R) 7.00 Signed Stories: Share a Story, (R) 7.05 Marvel's Avengers: Ultron Revolution, (R) 7.30 Scrambled!: The Tom and Jerry Show, (R) 7.50 Scrambled!: The Powerpuff Girls, (R) 8.10 Scrambled!: The Bagel and Becky Show, (R) 8.30 Scrambled!: Be Cool, Scooby-Doo!, (R) 9.05 Scrambled!: Wightart, (R) 9.25 ITV News, 9.30 James Martin's Saturday Morning, 11.20 Who's Doing the Dishes? (R) 12.20 ITV News; Weather, 12.30 Dancing on Ice – The Final, (R) 2.30 Britain's Brightest Family, (R) 3.00 Celebrity Catchphrase, (R) 4.00 Tipping Point, (R) 5.00 The Chase, (R) 6.00 ITV News; Weather,

6.20 Regional Programme; Weather.

6.30 New You've Been Framed! Harry Hill narrates a selection of mishaps filmed by viewers, featuring a woman being attacked by a remote-controlled plane and a man hit by a giant trampoline during a hurricane.

7.00 Ant & Dec's Saturday Night Takeaway. Comedian Alan Carr joins the fun as this week's guest announcer, while the Geordie duo go up against cast members from Coronation Street in the return of *Mack 'Em Laugh*. Plus, Stephen Mulhern hits the streets of Warrington in the latest edition of *In for a Penny*, a lucky audience member gets the chance to Win the Ads, and *Sofa Watch* sees more Places on the Plane up for grabs.

8.30 The Voice UK. Emma Willis presents the second of the knockout shows as the remaining acts sing for a place in next week's semi-final. Coaches Will.i.am, Tom Jones, Olly Murs and reigning champion Jennifer Hudson can pick only one act from their teams to progress in the competition, so there are some tough decisions to make. Helping them are R'n'B star Craig David, members of the Black Eyed Peas, Australian pop queen Kylie Minogue, 2006 winner of *The X Factor* Leona Lewis and *The Voice UK's* reigning champion, Mo Jamil.

10.30 ITV News; Weather.

10.45 Film: Fast & Furious 5. (2011) **2.00 (BST) Jackpot247, 3.00 Babushka.** (R) **3.50 ITV Nightscreen.**

CHANNEL 4

6.15 The King of Queens, (R) 6.40 The King of Queens, (R) 7.30 Mobil 1: The Grid, 8.00 Everybody Loves Raymond, (R) 8.55 Fraser, (R) 9.25 Fraser, (R) 10.00 Fraser, (R) 10.30 The Big Bang Theory, (R) 11.00 The Big Bang Theory, (R) 12.00 The Simpsons, (R) 12.30 The Simpsons, (R) 1.00 Formula 1 Australian Grand Prix Qualifying Highlights, 2.50 Car SOS, **3.50 Coast vs Country, (R) 4.50 A Place in the Sun: Summer Sun, (R) 5.35 The Secret Life of the Zoo, (R)**

6.30 Channel 4 News.

7.00 Coastal Railways with Julie Walters. The actress travels around the UK coast by train, beginning by boarding the famous Jacobite steam train for a trip along Scotland's West Highland Railway, famously featured in the Harry Potter movies. Along the way, Julie learns about herring gutting and blowing up railway lines, and meets a traditional Scottish storyteller on the Isle of Skye, (R)

8.00 Britain at Low Tide. Tori Herridge uncovers the story behind a dramatic night in 1976 when fishing trawler the Admiral Von Tromp went wildly off course in the North Sea, after setting off from Scarborough and running aground in Whitby, North Yorkshire, with the wreckage still visible on the shores of Saltwick Bay to this day. The massive remains of a First World War fort lead Tori to tales of love in the East Yorkshire hamlet of Kilnsea, and she learns the strange fate of two ships that were built in Hull but ended up on top of a mountain in Peru.

9.00 Film: Everest. (2015) Premiere. Two expeditions set out to climb to the summit of the world's highest mountain. Both parties of mountaineers get caught in one of the fiercest snowstorms ever recorded, and face a desperate struggle to survive against the elements. Fact-based adventure, starring Jason Clarke, Josh Brolin, Jake Gyllenhaal and Keira Knightley.

10.30 Film: Predator 2. (1990) Sci-fi thriller sequel, starring Danny Glover and Bill Paxton.

2.20 (BST) Ramsay's Kitchen Nightmares USA, (R) 3.10 Hollyoaks, (R) 5.15 Coast vs Country, (R)

CHANNEL 5

6.00 Milkshake, 10.00 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles, (R) 10.35 The Gadget Show, (R) 11.30 Police Interceptors, (R) 12.30 Police Interceptors, (R) 1.30 Aviva Premiership Rugby Union, Saracens v Harlequins (Kick-off 3.00pm), 5.15 Can't Pay? Well Take It Away, (R)

6.10 Can't Pay? Well Take It Away.

Kevin Stokes and Brian O'Shaughnessy chase a £16,000 debt run up by a coach company and Stewart McCracken and Elmor Victor face a heart-breaking house repossession, (R)

7.00 Cruising with Jane McDonald.

Jane cruises around Cuba aboard the Celestial Crystal, starting and ending in Havana, sampling the relatively new tourist industry of the Caribbean island, (R)

7.55 5 News Weekend.

8.00 Inside Windsor Castle. Documentary marking the centenary of the Windsor dynasty by examining the history of the royal residence over the past 80 years, looking at the tragedies and triumphs that have had an impact on the Queen and her family. The first edition reflects on the events of the past 25 years, including the fire in November 1992 that started in the private chapel and came at the end of a terrible year for the royals, with marital troubles hitting the Queen's three elder children, (R)

9.00 King Tut's Treasure Secrets. New series. Documentary exploring the thousands of items found with the great Egyptian pharaoh when his tomb was first uncovered.

9.55 King Tut's Tomb: The Hidden Chamber. Documentary examining recent discoveries made in the famous burial chamber, which archaeologists now believe may also be the resting place of Queen Nefertiti, (R)

10.50 Secrets of the Valley of the Kings. An exploration of the Valley of the Kings, the royal necropolis of the pharaohs and the world's most famous royal burial ground, (R)

11.40 Football on 5: Goal Rush. Colin Murray introduces all the goals from the weekend's games in Leagues One and Two.

12.15 SuperCasino, 3.10 Film: (BST) Due Date, (2010) **4.45 House Doctor, (R) 5.10 Great Artists, (R)**

DIGITAL**BBC Four**

7.00 Lost Kingdoms of Central America, 8.00 *The Silk Road*, 9.00 *Below the Surface*, 10.30 *Top of the Pops*, 1985

11.30 Police Interceptors, (R) 1.30 Police Interceptors, (R) 2.30 Live Aviva

Premiership Rugby Union, Saracens v Harlequins (Kick-off 3.00pm), 5.15 Can't

Pay? Well Take It Away, (R)

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12.15 SuperCasino, 3.10 Film: (BST) Due Date, (2010) **4.45 House Doctor, (R) 5.10 Great Artists, (R)**

12.30 American Dad!, 2.05 (BST) American Dad!, 2.30 Action Team

ITV2

11.20 Ant & Dec's Saturday Night Takeaway, 12.50 You've Been Framed!

Funnier 100 (2003) **1.55 Film:** Spy Kids 3-D: Game Over (2003) **2.55 FYI Daily 3.00 Film:** Spy Kids 3-D: Game Over (2003)

3.40 Film: Happy Feet (2006) **4.40 FYI Daily 4.50 Film:** Happy Feet (2006) **5.45 FYI Daily 6.50 Film:** The Mummy: Tomb of the Dragon Emperor (2008) **7.50 FYI Daily 7.00 Film:** The Amazing Spider-Man (2012) **8.55 FYI Daily 9.00 Film:** The Amazing Spider-Man (2012)

10.30 Celebrity Juice 11.35 Family Guy

12.35 American Dad!, 2.05 (BST) American Dad!, 2.30 Action Team

E4

12.30 Film: Dragonball Evolution (2009)

2.05 Rude(ish) Tube Shorts 2.30 The Goldbergs 3.00 Brooklyn Nine-Nine 3.30 Young Sheldon 4.00 The Great Celebrity Bake Off for Stand Up to Cancer 5.15 Extreme Cake Makers 6.00 The Big Bang Theory 9.00 Film: 2 Guns (2013) 11.05 Googlebox 12.10 Five Star Hotel 2.15 (BST) Five Star Hotel 3.20 The Inbetweeners 3.45 How I Met Your Mother

Film4

11.00 Anastasia (1997) 1.00 Flight of the Navigator (1986) 2.50 The Indian in the Cupboard (1995) 4.40 Carry On Cabby (1963) 6.35 Mrs Doubtfire (1993) 9.00 American Ultra (2015) 10.50 Zombieland (2009) 12.30 Nymphomaniac: Volume II (2013) 4.00 (BST) Close

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SUNDAY'S TV MARCH 25

CHOICE



Ewan and Colin McGregor

RAF at 100 with Ewan and Colin McGregor (BBC1, 8.30pm)

The actor and his former pilot brother present a celebration of the Royal Air Force's centenary, taking to the skies in iconic planes from the First World War to the present day. They also meet service personnel from throughout the RAF's history, including a veteran of the Battle of Britain, former female members of the Air Transport Auxiliary, crew members who had the responsibility of dropping the atom bomb, modern-day Typhoon fighter crews, and the last pilot to be involved in a dogfight.

BBC1

- 6.00 Breakfast.** **9.00** The Andrew Marr Show. **10.00** The Big Questions. **11.00** Regional Programme. **12.15** BBC News; Weather. **12.30** MasterChef. (R) **1.30** MasterChef. (R) **2.30** MasterChef. (R) **3.00** Money for Nothing. (R) **4.00** Regional Programme. **4.30** Songs of Praise. **5.05** Sport Relief 2018: The Best Bits.
- 6.05 BBC News.**
- 6.20 Regional Programme.**
- 6.30 Countryfile.** Matt Baker reports on a conservation project in Shropshire to prevent the county's rivers being polluted by iron ore brought to the surface by the area's long history of mining. Ellie Harrison visits a pop-up restaurant using only locally sourced ingredients and goes searching for pine martens. Steve Brown meets a glass sculptor, and Tom Heap reports on declining numbers of British hedgehogs.
- 7.30 Hold the Sun.** Phil fears he will lose Edith to Bob, and that a face from his past may make an unwelcome reappearance. Last in the series.
- 8.00 MasterChef.** John Torode and Gregg Wallace present the first of two programmes in which eight of the 16 cooks to make it through the heats must prepare one of their favourite dishes.
- 8.30 RAF at 100 with Ewan and Colin McGregor.** The actor and his former pilot brother present a celebration of the Royal Air Force's centenary, taking to the skies in iconic planes from the First World War to the present day. They also meet service personnel from throughout the RAF's history, including a veteran of the Battle of Britain, former female members of the Air Transport Auxiliary, crew members who had the responsibility of dropping the atom bomb, modern-day Typhoon fighter crews, and the last pilot to be involved in a dogfight.
- 10.00 BBC News.**
- 10.20 Regional Programme.**
- 10.30 Film:** *War of the Worlds.* (2005) A divorced father tries to protect his two children as alien war machines start to wipe out the human race. Steven Spielberg's sci-fi thriller, with Tom Cruise.
- 12.15 The Women's Football Show.**
- 12.50 Weather for the Week Ahead.**
- 12.55 BBC News.**

BBC2

- 6.20 Coast.** (R) **7.20** The Instant Gardener. (R) **8.35** Gardeners' World. (R) **9.35** Saturday Kitchen Best Bites. **11.50** Spring Kitchen with Tom Kerridge. (R) **11.50** Lorraine Pascale: How to Be a Better Cook. (R) **12.20** Homes Under the Hammer. (R) **1.20** Film: Bringing Up Baby. (1938) Screwball comedy starring Katharine Hepburn and Cary Grant. **3.00** Pilgrimage: The Road to Santiago. (R) **4.00** The Ladykillers: Pest Detectives. (R) **5.00** Film: Real Steel. (2011) Sci-fi drama, starring Hugh Jackman.
- 7.00 Down the Mighty River with Steve Backshall.** The naturalist travels down the Ballo River in New Guinea from its source to the sea, hoping to encounter the ancient tribes and dangerous wildlife that live long its banks and in the surrounding jungle. He begins his journey inland at Lake Habema, and braves some of the world's fiercest white water rapids. Along the way, he stays in a village belonging to the Dani tribe and ventures into some previously unexplored caves. (R)
- 8.00 Top Gear.** Matt LeBlanc test drives the Ferrari 812 Superfast, while Rory Reid travels to the US in search of a muscle car that is illegal in Europe. With guest Vicki McClure (Line of Duty).
- 9.00 Reggie Yates: Searching for Grenfell's Lost Lives.** The presenter meets families and friends of people who died in the Grenfell fire, to gain an understanding of the disaster's victims as people and as members of a community.
- 10.00 Mock the Week.** James Acaster, Angela Barnes, Kerry Godliman, Nish Kumar and Glenn Moore join host Dara O Briain and regular Hugh Dennis for the topical comedy show. (R)
- 10.30 Top Gear: Extra Gear.** Chris Harris takes the new Porsche GT3 for a spin on the track, while motoring journalist Alex Kersten and racing engineer Mark Wynne chat about the future of the V12 engine.
- 10.55 Film:** *Life of Crime.* (2013) Two criminals kidnap the wife of a corrupt real-estate tycoon, only to discover he is not willing to pay their ransom demand. Comedy, with Jennifer Aniston.
- 12.30 Sign Zone: Question Time.** (R) **1.30** Holby City. (R) **2.30** This Is BBC Two.

ITV

- 6.00 CITV: Sooty.** **6.10** Grizzly Tales for Gruenes Kids. (R) **6.20** Grizzly Tales for Gruenes Kids. (R) **6.35** Dino Dan: Treks Adventures. (R) **6.50** Super 4. (R) **7.00** Signed Stories: Share a Story. (R) **7.05** Marvel's Avengers: Ultron Revolution! **7.30** Scrambled!: The Tom and Jerry Show. (R) **7.50** Scrambled!: Teen Titans Go! (R) **8.10** Scrambled!: Mr Bean: The Animated Series. (R) **8.30** Scrambled!: Spy School. (R) **8.45** Scrambled!: Wiggles. (R) **9.25** ITV News. **9.30** Britain's Best Walks with Julia Bradbury. (R) **10.00** Peston on Sunday. **11.00** The Voice UK. (R) **12.50** ITV News: Weather. **1.00** Ant & Dec's Saturday Night Takeaway. (R) **2.30** You've Been Framed! (R) **3.00** Tenable. (R) **4.00** Tipping Point. (R) **5.00** The Chase: Celebrity Special. (R)
- 6.00 Paul O'Grady: For the Love of Dogs.** (R)
- 6.30 ITV News:** Weather.
- 6.45 Regional Programme:** Weather.
- 7.00 Celebrity Catchphrase.** Stephen Mulhern hosts a celebrity edition of the game show, asking contestants Jonathan Ross, Tess Daly and Linda Robson to "see it and say it" as they try to guess the familiar phrases hidden in animated clues. After the first elimination, the two remaining players battle to reach the Super Catchphrase round, where one of them could win £50,000 for the charity of their choice.
- 8.00 The Durrells.** Louisa and Larry receive the devastating news that Aunt Hermione has died in her sleep. As the family make arrangements to have her body sent back to England, Margo gets to work on organising a memorial service. Leslie decides that he wants to be with Dionsia, and prepares to let Daphne down gently – however, it turns out that she is pregnant with his child, and her father is determined that they must get married as soon as possible. Gerry becomes fascinated by a wall in the back garden that is covered in insects.
- 9.00 The Good Karma Hospital.** Lydia tries to regain the trust of a former patient.
- 10.00 ITV News:** Weather.
- 10.20 Peston on Sunday.** (R)
- 11.20 Film:** *Captain Corelli's Mandolin.* (2001)
- 1.25 Jackpot247.** **3.00** Marcella. (R)

CHANNEL 4

- 6.10 The King of Queens.** (R) **6.35** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **7.00** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **7.25** Fraser. (R) **7.55** Frasier. (R) **8.25** Race of Champions 2018. **9.30** Sunday Brunch. **12.30** Jamie and Jimmy's Friday Night Feast. (R) **1.30** The Simpsons. (R) **2.00** The Simpsons. (R) **2.30** Formula 1 Australian Grand Prix Highlights. **5.15** The Great Celebrity Bake Off for Stand up to Cancer. (R)
- 6.30 Channel 4 News.**
- 7.00 Homes by the Med.** Charlie Luxton explores Croatia's Dalmatian coast and islands, and visits a gleaming white property that cascades down the side of a cliff on the island of Brac. Previously shown on More4.
- 8.00 Escape to the Chateau.** Dick celebrates his birthday with a hot air balloon ride over the chateau at sunrise, before setting to work in the kitchen making his own jam and alcohol from the vast quantities of fresh fruit waiting to be harvested in the garden. Angel starts work on a new project of her own – building a geodesic dome on top of a floating platform.
- 9.00 Homeland.** Saul calls an old friend, while Wellington has a problem and Carrie enjoys a win. Starring Claire Danes.
- 10.15 8 Out of 10 Cats Does Countdown.** Jimmy Carr returns with the comedy version of the words-and-numbers quiz, with Jon Richardson and James Acaster teaming up against Lee Mack and Sarah Millican. (R)
- 11.10 Film:** *Rush.* (2013) Formula One racer James Hunt and Niki Lauda develop a fierce rivalry over the course of the 1976 championship. Fact-based drama, with Chris Hemsworth and Daniel Bruhl.
- 1.25 The Last Leg.** Adam Hills, Josh Widdicombe and Alex Brooker are joined by celebrity guests for a comic review of the significant moments of the past seven days. Last in the series. (R) **2.20** The Question Jury. Tension mounts and loyalties are put to the test as two of the jurors go head to head in a battle to win the money. (R) **3.15** KOTV Boxing Weekly. Action from bouts around the world. **3.45** Mobil 1: The Grid. (R) **4.40** Coast vs Country. Sara Dameri and Kerr Drummond help Tony and Michelle, who have lived in Oxfordshire for 10 years and are keen to sample a more relaxed pace of life in Dorset. (R) **5.35** Streetmate. (R)

CHANNEL 5

- 6.00 Milkshake!** Little Princess. **6.10** Whisper. (R) **6.20** Milkshake! Puppies. (R) **6.30** Moty. (R) **6.35** Simon. (R) **6.40** Paw Patrol. (R) **6.55** Thomas & Friends. (R) **7.15** Fireman Sam. (R) **7.25** Olly the Little White Van. (R) **7.35** Blaze and the Monster Machines. **7.55** Paw Patrol. (R) **8.15** Nella the Princess Knight. (R) **8.30** Noddy: Toyland Detective. (R) **8.50** Ben and Holly's Little Kingdom. (R) **9.10** Shimmer and Shine. (R) **9.15** Digby Dragon. (R) **9.35** Peppa Pig. (R) **9.45** Peppa Pig. (R) **9.50** Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles. (R) **10.25** Football on 5: Goal Rush. (R) **10.50** Cats Make You Laugh Out Loud. (R) **11.20** Police Interceptors: Dog Squad Special. (R) **12.20** Film: *The Illusionist.* (2006) Mystery thriller, starring Edward Norton. **2.25** Film: *The Man in the Iron Mask.* (1998) Swashbuckling adventure, starring Leonardo DiCaprio. **4.45** Film: *A Knight's Tale.* (2001) Medieval comedy adventure, starring Heath Ledger. **5.45** News Update. **5.50** Film: *A Knight's Tale.* (2001) Concluded.
- 7.15 Can't Pay? We'll Take It Away.** The agents try to recover more than £2,000 owed by a jeweller to one of his suppliers, and chase up more than £3,000 owed by a tenant to her former landlord for rent arrears. (R)
- 8.00 Can't Pay? We'll Take It Away.** Agents chase more than £1,700 in unpaid parking fines in south-east London, but struggle to pinpoint the debtor. Meanwhile, officers in north Wales try to recover the £2,000 owed by a tradesman to a former employer, and in Kent, agents chase £8,000 owed by a jewellery shop to two former employees. (R)
- 8.55 5 News Weekend.**
- 9.00 Film:** *The Bodyguard.* (1992) A famous singer subjected to death threats by an obsessive fan is persuaded to hire a former secret service agent as her bodyguard, but neither of them realise the effect they have about to have on each other's lives. Romantic thriller, starring Kevin Costner.

10.00 5 News Update.

10.05 Film: *The Bodyguard.* (1992) Concluded.

- 11.35 Film:** *Whitney Houston: A Tragic Love.* (2015)

- 1.20 Whitney Houston:** Her Greatest Hits. **2.10** SuperCasino. **3.10** Greatest Ever Celebrity Wind Ups. (R)

DIGITAL

BBC Four

- 7.00 Only Connect** **7.30** University Challenge **8.00** Ancient Greek: The Greatest Show on Earth **9.00** Capability Brown's Unfinished Garden **10.00** The Banker's Guide to Art **11.30** The Secret Life of Children's Books **12.00** The World's Most Beautiful Eggs: The Genius of Carl Fabergé **1.00** Moombin and Tales: The Life of Tove Jansson **2.00** Capability Brown's Unfinished Garden **3.00** And Then There Were None **4.00** Close

ITV2

- 12.10 You've Been Framed!** Top 100 Animals **1.10** The Voice UK **3.05** Britain's Got Talent: Stephen's Unsung Heroes **4.10** Film: *Hotel Transylvania 2* (2015) **5.10** FYI Daily **5.15** Film: Hotel Transylvania 2 (2015) **5.55** Film: Happy Feet Two (2011) **6.55** FYI Daily **7.00** Film: Happy Feet Two (2011) **8.00** Film: *Skyfall* (2012) **9.00** FYI Daily **9.05** Film: *Skyfall* (2012) **10.50** Family Guy **12.20** American Dad! **1.15** Ibiza Weekender **2.20** Teleshopping **5.50** ITV2 Nightscreen

ITV3

- 11.55 A Touch of Frost** **1.55** Film: *Brief Encounter* (1945) **3.40** Film: *The Theory of Everything* (2014) **6.00** Vera **8.00** The Cruis. **9.00** Joanna Lumley's Trans-Siberian Adventure **10.00** Murder on the Home Front **12.05** Film: *Evil Under the Sun* (1982) **2.25** Blue Murder **3.40** Rising Damp **4.00** Road to Avonlea **5.45** ITV3 Nightscreen

ITV4

- 12.45 Live Snooker:** Players Championship. The opening session of the final from Venue Cymru, Llandudno. **5.15** Storage Wars **6.45** Live Snooker: Players Championship **11.15** Film: *Senna* (2010) **12.15** FYI Daily **12.20** Film: *Senna* (2010) **1.25** It's Not Rocket Science **3.00** Fishing Allstars **3.00** Teleshopping **4**
- 11.30 The Goldbergs** **1.30** The Big Bang Theory **5.00** The Goldbergs **5.30** Brooklyn Nine-Nine **6.00** Young Sheldon **6.30** The Big Bang Theory **6.55** Film: *Fantastic Four* (2005) **9.00** Marvel's Agents of SHIELD **10.00** The Inbetweeners **11.10** The Big Bang Theory **12.05** Five Star Hotel **3.05** Marvel's Agents of SHIELD **3.50** Hollywoods
- 11.00 Bridge to Terabithia** (2007) **1.00** Ever After: A Cinderella Story (1998) **3.35** Hugo (2011) **6.05** The Hunger Games: Catching Fire (2013) **9.00** Oblivion (2013) **11.25** Child 44 (2015) **2.05** Submarine (2010) **4.00** Close

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STOCK CLEARANCE



FILM CHOICES**MONDAY**

Kidnapped: Desperate Hours, Channel 5, 3.15pm
An American wife's world is turned upside down when her husband, the son of a Mexican newspaper publisher, is kidnapped. Drama, starring Teri Polo, Esai Morales and Nicholas Gonzalez. Edited for daytime broadcast. (2011)

TUESDAY**Mr & Mrs Smith**, Channel 5, 10pm

An outwardly bored suburban couple lead double lives as professional assassins, both unaware of their partner's secret. When they are hired to kill each other, the deadly situation puts some much-needed excitement back into their stale relationship. Comedy adventure, starring Brad Pitt, Angelina Jolie, Vince Vaughn and Adam Brody. (2005)

WEDNESDAY**Under Siege**, Channel 5, 11.05pm

Terrorists infiltrate a US battleship in a carefully orchestrated move to steal its arsenal of nuclear weapons, unaware the ship's resourceful cook - a veteran US Navy Seal - and a scantily clad stripper are about to foil their plans. Action adventure, starring Steven Seagal, Erika Eleniak, Gary Busey and Tommy Lee Jones. (1992)



Fast & Furious, Friday, ITV, 9pm

THURSDAY**Buried Secrets**, Channel 5, 3.15pm

Former cop Sarah Winters publishes her first novel, and finds herself on the wrong side of the law when her book's plot seems to mirror an all-too-real murder case. Thriller, starring Sarah Carter. (2014)

FRIDAY**Fast & Furious 7**, ITV, 9pm

Premiere. After defeating Owen Shaw and his crew and securing amnesty for their past crimes, Dom, Brian and the rest of the team return home to live normal lives again. However Shaw's older brother Deckard - a rogue special forces assassin - vows revenge on Dom, who he holds responsible for leaving Owen in a coma. Action thriller sequel, starring Vin Diesel, Jason Statham and Paul Walker in his last film role. (2015)

Famous faces show their naked ambition for a good cause

It takes some cojones to back a film, no matter how good the script is. In 1996, the idea of unemployed Sheffield blokes stripping on stage sounded like a bad idea for a TV one-off, let alone a big screen comedy.

But great films are never born without risk, and by the time it saw the light of day a year later, *The Full Monty* went from indie curio to major blockbuster.

While other Brit flicks of 1997, like *Lawn Dogs* and *Face*, vanished with the skill of a stealth fighter, *The Full Monty* became a phenomenon.

The VHS copies (and later DVDs) sold out in no time; worthy yet jobbing actors like Tom Wilkinson, Mark Addy and Robert Carlyle were wooed by Hollywood, and aside from Anne Dudley landing an Oscar for her inspired score, the film was turned into a successful stage show.

Last summer, the brand was also adapted for a hit ITV spectacular in which famous faces stripped off to raise awareness of men's cancers.

Now it's back for a new full-frontal extravaganza, and this time it's live from Sheffield, the home of the original movie.

Ashley Banjo and Alexander Armstrong will be putting together a bigger and bolder show, and they are joined by TV presenter Jeff Brazier; former Rugby International star Ugo Monye and *TOWIE* veteran James Argent.

And there's a load more talent joining them, from the Wanted's Tom Parker, ex-footballer John Hartson, and chef Ainsley Harriot to former EastEnders John Partridge.

They will share their personal stories and learn how to shed their iconic security guard uniforms to stir up a storm on stage in the Steel City. Hopefully they will also inspire more men to make vital checks that could save lives.

"Last year's show was a major success, particularly given it was unknown territory," explains Alexander. "But now we want to see if we can aim for an even better performance to grab people's

attention again for this cause."

"Hopefully, we're in for even more fun as we take another bunch of blokes and turn them into show stoppers capable of turning the audience into a frenzy."

Ashley adds: "After the amazing time we had last year, I can't wait to get the chance to teach the 2018 intake how to forget their inhibitions and put on an unforgettable show to raise awareness for this incredibly important issue that really can save lives."

A day after this show airs, some familiar faces will be popping up in another ITV special, *The Real Full Monty: Ladies' Night*.

Presenters Coleen Nolan and Sarah-Jane Crawford, and actresses Helen Lederer and Ruth Madoc are determined to show the boys how it's done and raise awareness of breast cancer.

They are joined by broadcaster Victoria Derbyshire; Emmerdale's Sally Dexter; reality star Megan McKenna and former Liberty X singer Michelle Heaton.



The Real Full Monty: Live, Wednesday, ITV, 9pm

BEST OF THE REST

MONDAY**Thrifty Ways to - Summer Holiday****Channel 4, 8.30pm**

Katie Piper presents a programme giving viewers hot tips on how to shop better for a fraction of the usual price, offering the inside track on ways to get more bang for your buck. She is joined by travel industry expert Amar Latif to demonstrate how to be thrifty about booking a summer holiday - it's family time in Tenerife or a city break in Bath or tips, as well as tricks on how to get cut prices in Orlando. The show offers handy money saving hacks and tips into local knowledge to access the best deals.

TUESDAY**Live International Football****ITV, 7.30pm**

England v Italy (Kick-off 8.00pm). Mark Pougatch is joined by Lee Dixon, Ian Wright and Slaven Bilic to present coverage of the friendly match from Wembley Stadium, as England continue their preparations for the 2018 World Cup. With the tournament in Russia only a few months away, Gareth Southgate will see this encounter as an ideal opportunity to assess some of the members in his squad, and potentially play one or two players who have previously been on the fringe of contention, but looking to force their way into his plans.

Come Home
BBC1, 9pm

Award-winning screenwriter Danny Brocklehurst is one of the brains behind this three-part family drama. Set in Northern Ireland, it focuses on mother Marie (Paula Malcomson), who decides to walk out on husband Greg (Christopher Eccleston), and their three children. The first episode is told from Greg's perspective, and follows him and their kids as they struggle to comprehend their mother's actions. While Greg juggles work at Farrell Motors, raising his children and coping with the trials and tribulations of dating again, he tries to keep a sense of normality. However, it remains to be seen whether he will be able to move on when he's trapped in the past. With the aid of multiple timeframes, viewpoints and flashbacks, Greg and Marie's story should be THE talking point for many around the UK.

WEDNESDAY
The Assassination of Gianni Versace: American Crime Story
BBC2, 9pm
The fact-based US crime drama continues. Andrew Cunanan

invites himself to stay in Minneapolis with friends David Madison and Jeff Trail. Although Jeff has managed to build a new life for himself in the city, he is still troubled by the ending of his US Navy career back in 1995. Meanwhile, Gianni Versace opens up about his relationship with his partner Antonio to a magazine, against the advice of

Donatella. Starring Darren Criss, Cody Fern, Finn Wittrock, Edgar Ramirez, Ricky Martin and Penelope Cruz.

THURSDAY**The Real Full Monty: Ladies' Night****ITV, 9pm**

Following the success of last year's The Real Full Monty - and last night's follow up - it's the turn of a group of female celebrities to bare all in the name of cancer awareness. However, they won't just be looking to the men and the hit film The Full Monty for inspiration, as the programme also marks 20 years since the écalendar girls' of the

Rylstone and District WI posed for their iconic nude photos. The ladies taking part are TV presenter Coleen Nolan, broadcaster Victoria Derbyshire, Emmerdale actress Sally Dexter, reality TV star Megan McKenna, former Liberty X singer Michelle Heaton, actress Helen Lederer, TV legend Ruth Madoc and presenter Sarah-Jane Crawford, and the issue of breast cancer awareness is close to all their hearts. But will that be enough to get them over their body issues and inhibitions as they prepare to put on a show?

FRIDAY**Britain's Great Cathedrals with Tony Robinson****Channel 5, 8pm**

New series. The actor visits York Minster, which over the past 800 years, has been a backdrop to some of the most dramatic events in British history. It houses more than half of all the world's medieval glass, including the Rose Window, commissioned by Henry VIII, and the East Window, the largest stained glass window in the world. A succession of outspoken bishops of York have defied Nazis, married kings and queens, and more recently championed equality with Archbishop John Sentamu, the country's first black bishop, consecrating the world's first female bishop, Libby Lane, in 2014.

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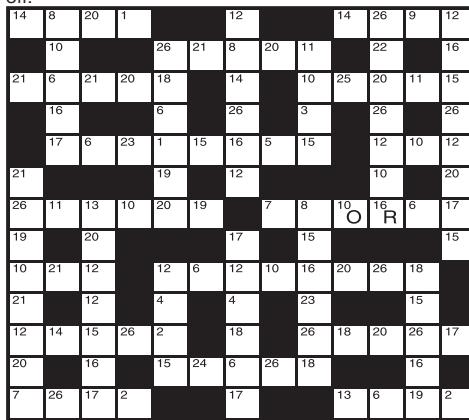
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BRAIN GYM

No.472

Codeword

Each number in the grid represents a different letter of the alphabet and every letter of the alphabet is used. Use the given letter(s) to the right of the main grid to start you off.



LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION:

1	F	2	H	3	G	4	D	N	X	6	R	7	U	8	M	9	K	10	C	11	W	12	P
14	J	15	S	16	I	17	Q	18	O	19	Z	20	E	21	V	22	A	23	T	24	L	25	Y

Quiz

- Whose novel *Brideshead Revisited* was published in 1945?
- On which Hebridean island is Fingal's Cave?
- Which A-Team star died in 1994?
- Which British coin was discontinued in 1961?
- Which ceremonial office is held by the Lordship of Scrivelsby, Lincolnshire?
- Who wrote the classic jazz number Round Midnight?
- What is the capital of Croatia?
- Who made his US film debut as Christ in The Greatest Story Ever Told?
- Which Indian state's name is Sanskrit for 'five rivers'?
- Who is the host of University Challenge?

Double Crossword

Choose either quick or cryptic clues - both fit the same grid.

Cryptic Clues: Across

- | | |
|----|------|
| 1 | 14 |
| 2 | 15 |
| 3 | 16 R |
| 4 | 17 |
| 5 | 18 |
| 6 | 19 |
| 7 | 20 |
| 8 | 21 |
| 9 | 22 |
| 10 | 23 O |
| 11 | 24 |
| 12 | 25 |
| 13 | 26 |
1. Unsavoury scoundrel (3,3)
4. This singer, given a chance, could win a fortune (6)
9. A job done for nothing? (9,4)
10. Listens out for recruits (7)
11. Superstitious symbol of many following a gambling system (5)
12. Am given little scope (5)
14. Bird doctor goes round to object (5)
18. Shape altered a great deal (5)
19. A bone from Munster (7)
21. Having the wisdom not to get excited (13)
22. What water pipes should be kept behind? (6)
23. Credit is twice provided in an emergency (6)

Down

1. Strike for which the catering staff is responsible (6)
2. Ambiguous combination of nobleman and guide (6,7)
3. Entrances groups of spectators (5)
5. It may be worn as a favour (7)
6. What a metalworker may say when they go wrong? (5,8)
7. I smoke a strange mixture, being a northerner (6)
8. A case in point? Finish with just the opposite (5)
13. Waiting to be stocked (2,5)
15. The Spanish man comes first in church (6)
16. Legally prevent poets being translated (5)
17. Yet they may form a large part of the weekly wash (6)
20. Three mixed the upper air (5)
23. Signify (6)
23. Pure (6)

Quick Clues:

Across

- Far off (6)
- Self-possession (6)
- Unselfish (13)
- Disease (7)
- Scorch (5)
- Pungent (5)
- Viper (5)
- Cordage (5)
- Plant (7)
- On sale, cheaply (5,3,1,4)
- Signify (6)
- Pure (6)

Down

- Diminish (6)
- Mistaken idea (13)
- Taut (5)
- Delighted (7)
- In impatient suspense (2,11)
- Pester (6)
- Postpone (5)
- Visible (2,5)
- Cold (6)
- Pitch (5)
- Shoe (6)
- Confound (5)

Last week's solutions:

- Quiz: 1 7; 2 La Paz; 3 Utah; 4 Woolsack;
5 Kigali; 6 Opium; 7 Sir Christopher Wren;
8 Volga; 9 Vulcan; 10 Yukon.

Niner: SLOUCHING

Niner

Each number from 1 to 9 represents a different letter. Solve the clues and insert the letters in the appropriate squares to discover a word which uses all nine letters.

239211
6539689
272486

gives a British city,
gives a British town,
gives a second British town.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

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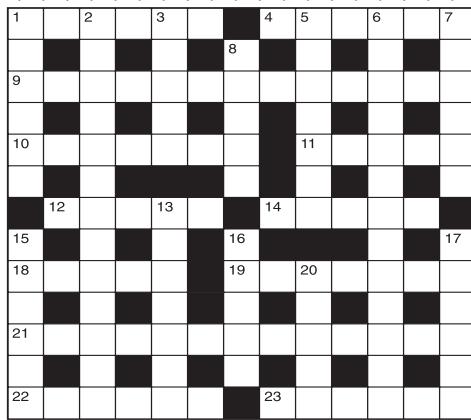


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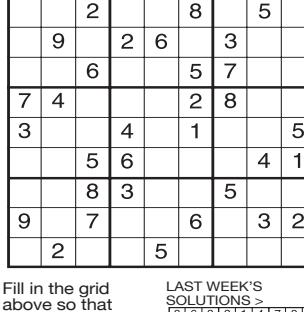


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Sudoku



LAST WEEK'S SOLUTIONS >

8 6 3 2 1 4 7 9 5
1 2 4 5 9 7 6 3 8
9 7 5 6 8 3 4 2 1
5 3 1 9 7 6 8 4 2
6 8 7 3 4 1 2 5 9
2 4 9 1 5 8 3 6 7
4 5 8 7 3 9 2 1 6
7 1 2 4 6 5 9 8 3
3 9 6 8 2 1 5 7 4

LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD SOLUTIONS:
CRYPTIC - Across: 1 Health resort; 7 Staff;
8 Acute; 9 Aid; 10 Distended; 11 Panama;
12 Dangle; 15 Reconcile; 17 Yes; 18 Noise;
19 Timed; 21 Consolidates. Down: 1 Heir apparent; 2 Tea; 3 Refuse; 4 Stalemate; 5 Round; 6 Helplessness; 7 Sedan; 10 Domineers; 13 Guyed; 14 Pistol; 16 Cairo; 20 Mad. QUICK - Across: 1 San Francisco; 7 After; 8 Train; 9 Tie; 10 Fragrance; 11 Nudist; 12 Reform; 15 Sepulchre; 17 Inn; 18 Arena; 19 Ocean; 21 Here and there. Down: 1 Shooting star; 2 Rot; 3 Normal; 4 Intervene; 5 Chain; 6 Interminable; 7 Ahead; 10 Fusillade; 13 Orion; 14 Thrown; 16 Piece; 20 Eat.

No Lye-ing, this was perfect night out

WE have a wonderful afternoon and evening. We had to – because it was by order of the Peaky Blinders!

Having booked an evening meal at the Windsor Castle Inn in Lye we thought we'd try somewhere already renowned for its good food. And, perhaps just as importantly, a place that brewed its own award-winning beer on site and had a gin emporium.

The Saturday just happened to clash with one of Sadler's now famous Peaky Blinders-themed days and we were lucky to have stumbled across it. The only Peaky-style clothing I own is a Christmas T-shirt, which my wife, Kelly, banned me from wearing (it was approaching spring after all) so we went as we were.

QUAINT

However, many had made the effort and it really was a set back in time when we enjoyed a few meal drinks in Sadler's Brewhouse & Bar, just behind Lye Railway Station, with live music and draft real ales.

We then made our way to the Windsor Castle Inn, a five-minute walk, for our meal. The Windsor is a nice, quaint pub that always serves at least 10 of its own real ales.

The brewery started in 1900, founded by Nathaniel Sadler, the great, great grandfather to Emily and Chris Sadler. It supplied its 12-tied public houses, the most famous being The Windsor Castle, the original brewery tap house, first based in Oldbury.

Now in Lye, near Stourbridge, the brewery has once again become a thriving family-run microbrewery, owned by Chris Sadler, supplying public houses and supermarkets with Sadler's cask and bottled ales throughout the Midlands and country. And there were plenty of groups enjoying brewery tours too – so if anyone fancies soaking up some of the pub's rich



Tuck into the crab and scallop dish

Idea for pub grub – the Windsor Castle Inn



history something like that would be worth a punt. The 1920-inspired Dr Hardwicke's Gin Emporium, which opened in the summer, also boasts more than 35 spirits.

There was a little drama when we arrived as there had been a mix-up with our booking – and we didn't exist according to their records. But after producing the email apologies were made and they found us a table for two. We were even offered a free round of drinks.

As it was Peaky-themed night the pub was busy, so if you're thinking of a romantic or quiet evening for two, it's perhaps best to avoid such an evening. However, we

loved the atmosphere and were treated superbly by the staff, who have also won awards for their service.

So it was finally time to order some starters and I have to say we guessed right when we decided to share one because it was more than ample. We opted for the crab and scallop thermidor, which came with mixed leaves and homemade bread. Each homemade meal comes with a recommendation of the perfect pint of craft beer to accompany the food. For me, fish is always the number one option and luckily the Windsor Castle Inn has its fish delivered fresh from the markets every

morning. The loin of cod, served with a seafood ragout, seasonal vegetables and a choice of dauphinoise or hand-cut chips stole the show.

Kelly went for the pork medley, a trio of braised pork belly, pork and leek sausage, and grilled pork chop on a bed of creamy mashed potato served with black pudding, cider jus and seasonal vegetables. 'Amazing' was how she described it.

So if you enjoy real ales, a selection of gins and some lovely homemade food, it's worth giving The Windsor Castle Inn a try.

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Superb ultra modern four-bed residence new to the market

WEST BROMWICH
£370,000 >>>

New to the property market, this ultra modern four-bedroomed detached home in Marnham Road, West Bromwich, lies on the ever popular Churchfields Estate.

It is for sale through Connells Estate Agents at £370,000.

The property features stunning living space and would be perfect for a growing family. The house includes a kitchen/diner, a large conservatory, an en-suite, guest WC, off-road parking and an integral garage. Being L-shaped, the kitchen/diner has a range of fitted wall and base units with work surfaces over, a stainless steel 1.5-bowl sink drainer, electric oven, gas hob, cooker hood over, plumbing for a washing machine and a door leading to the garden.

For further information, or to book that all important viewing to see if this is the ideal next home for you, contact Connells on 0121 525 1177.



Double-fronted detached house in a prime position

TIPTON
£220,000

A double fronted detached family home that is beautifully presented throughout in St Helens Avenue, Tipton, is for sale through Skitts Estate Agents at offers over £220,000.

It is positioned on a prime spot on the highly in demand 'Bridgemere' estate in Tipton.

The spacious property has three double bedrooms and has been completed to a very high standard. Interested parties are recommended to view the interior to appreciate this stunning home.

The accommodation has three reception rooms, a conservatory and study/office space as well as a kitchen, utility room, family bathroom, en-suite and downstairs WC.

To the front you have off-street park parking for several vehicles and a side gate leading into the easy to maintain South-East facing garden with decking.



Family house with potential is appealing and spacious

OLDBURY
£142,500 <<<

This three-bedroomed end terrace house in Tame Road, Oldbury, is an extremely spacious property, situated in a popular and convenient location.

Within walking distance of local amenities and good local schools, it is in need of some updating, although it does have excellent potential.

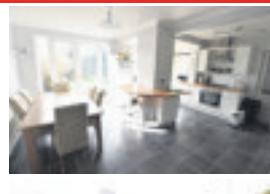
An ideal first-time buy, it is for sale through Braithwaite's Estate Agents now at £142,500 with no chain.

With gas central heating and double glazing, its accommodation includes a porch, an entrance hall, an extended through lounge/dining area, a fitted dining kitchen, three bedrooms, a bathroom, a study/office and a rear garage.

For further information or to book a viewing, contact Braithwaite's on 0121 4211180 or visit www.braithwaite-estate-agents.co.uk



Oldbury



Rowley Regis



Halesowen



Barston Road

- Extended Semi-Detached House
 - Extended Kitchen/Dining Room
 - Living Room
 - Ground Floor Shower Room and First Floor Bathroom
 - Three Bedrooms
 - Rear Garden
 - Rear Garage EPC=D
- Offers in the region of £209,950

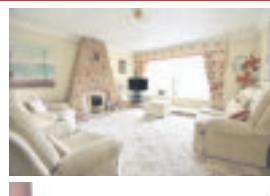
Woodnorton Road

- Mid Terraced House
 - Lounge
 - Extended Re-Fitted Kitchen/Dining Room
 - Three Bedrooms
 - Bathroom
 - Rear Garden
 - Off Road Parking EPC=D
- Offers in the region of £164,950

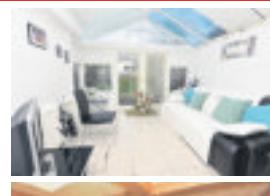
Carters Lane

- Desirable Family Home in Popular location.
 - Sitting Room and Living Room
 - Extended Kitchen/Breakfast Room
 - Utility • Downstairs wc
 - Four Bedrooms
 - Bathroom and Shower Room
 - Small Garage EPC=D
- Offers in the region of £429,950

Halesowen



Cradley Heath



Chantry Drive

- Spacious Detached Bungalow
 - Popular Location Convenient for Hagley Road West
 - Through Living Room • Kitchen
 - Three Bedrooms
 - Bathroom & Ensuite Shower Room
 - Garage • Rear Garden EPC=D
- Offers in the region of £360,000

Trejon Road

- Semi-Detached House
 - Kitchen/Breakfast Room
 - Through Living Room • Conservatory
 - Downstairs wc
 - Three Bedrooms
 - Garage
 - Good Sized Rear Garden EPC=E
- Offers in the region of £179,950

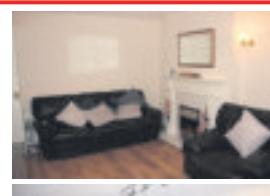
Oldbury



Wolverhampton Road

- Semi-Detached House
 - Two Reception Rooms
 - Kitchen
 - Conservatory
 - Three Bedrooms
 - Re-Fitted Bathroom with Shower Cubicle
 - Rear Garden EPC=D
- Offers in the region of £209,950

Cradley Heath



Peartree Lane

- Impressive Double Fronted House
 - Study, Lounge and Snug/Dining Room
 - Kitchen/Breakfast Room
 - Principal Bedroom with En Suite Shower Room • Three Further Bedrooms
 - Bathroom
 - Garage and parking Space EPC=C
- Offers in the region of £225,000

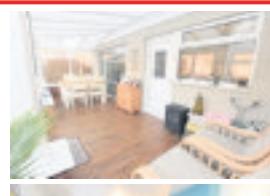
Oldbury



Smethwick



Oldbury



Birch Road

- Link-Detached Bungalow
 - Good Sized Living Room
 - Re-Fitted Kitchen
 - Conservatory
 - Two Bedrooms
 - Re-Fitted Bathroom
 - Garage and Rear Garden EPC=D
- Offers in the region of £249,950

Halesowen



Halesowen



Spies Lane

- Semi-Detached House
 - Two Reception Rooms
 - Kitchen* Conservatory
 - Three Bedrooms
 - Bathroom
 - Rear Garden
 - Parking to Rear EPC=D
- Offers in the region of £230,000

West Bromwich



Howley Grange Road



Wood Lane

- The Courtyard
- Contemporary 1st Floor Retirement Flat
 - For 55's and over
 - Living/Dining Room • Kitchen
 - Two Bedrooms
 - Bathroom and En-suite Shower Room
 - Allocated Parking Space EPC=B
- Fixed Price £60,000

Offers in the region of £199,950

Halesowen



Oldbury



Woodland Road

- Family Home in Popular Location
 - Through Living Room
 - Extended Kitchen/Breakfast Room
 - Three Bedrooms
 - Bathroom
 - Garage
 - Good Sized Rear Garden EPC=E
- Offers in the region of £259,950

Pennycricket Lane

- Terraced House
 - Kitchen
 - Through Lounge
 - Bathroom with Shower Cubicle
 - Two Bedrooms
 - Rear Garden
- EPC=E
- Offers in the region of £135,000

Trinder Road

- Semi-Detached House
 - Kitchen/Breakfast Room
 - Downstairs W.C.
 - Three Bedrooms
 - First Floor Bathroom
 - Rear Garden
- EPC=D
- Offers in the region of £159,950

Birmingham B32



Pembrey Close

- Semi-Detached House
 - Living Room
 - Dining Room
 - Kitchen/Breakfast Room
 - Two Bedrooms • Study/Cot Room
 - Bathroom
 - Separate WC
 - Rear Garden EPC=D
- Offers in the region of £149,950

Oldbury

Queensway



Henderson Court

- Duplex Flat
 - Kitchen/Breakfast Room
 - L Shaped Living Room
 - Three Bedrooms
 - Bathroom
 - Communal Parking EPC=D
- Offers in the region of £90,000

High Farm Road



Quinton



Quinton Road West

- Semi-detached House
 - Through Living Room
 - Kitchen
 - Conservatory
 - Two Bedrooms and Cot Room/Study
 - Bathroom and Separate WC
 - Rear Garage • Garden EPC=E
- Offers in the region of £179,950

Halesowen



Halesowen Road

- The Grange
- Two Bedroom Second Floor Flat Situated in Popular Flat Development
 - Living Room • Re-fitted Kitchen Area
 - Two Good Sized Bedrooms
 - Re-fitted Shower Room
 - Garage EPC=D
- No Upward Chain EPC=B
- Offers in the region of £129,950

Halesowen



Blackberry Lane

- Lyttleton House
- First Floor Flat
 - Open Plan Kitchen/Living Room
 - Bedroom • Shower Room
 - Garage
 - To Be Sold with Extended Lease
 - All Enquiries Via Agents EPC=E
- Offers in the region of £65,000

Tipton



Wake Green Road

- Carver Court
- First Floor Flat
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 - Bedroom • Shower Room
 - Garage
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Local Specialists



Our Specialist Section offers you a wide range of local businesses and tradesmen to deal with your needs and requirements.

ADVERTISEMENTS CONDITIONS OF ACCEPTANCE

1. Midland News Association Limited All publications in this group are published by the Midland News Association Limited, registered office Queen Street, Wolverhampton WV1 1ES ('the Company') and this is the address to which any notices should be sent.
2. **Acceptance** The Company will only accept advertising on these standard terms and no other contract terms or conditions will apply other than those which are implied by statute and cannot lawfully be excluded. In particular the Company will not accept advertising on the basis of advertiser's terms and conditions.
3. **Content of Advertisements** All advertisements must be legal decent honest and truthful. Advertisements must comply with the British Code of Advertising Practice and all other codes under the general supervision of the Advertising Standards Authority. Advertisements must comply with the requirements of all current legislation including but not limited to the following: - All advertisements must clearly differentiate between trade and private advertising as required by the Business Advertisements (Disclosure) Order 1977. Advertisements offering credit or hire facilities must comply with the Consumer Credit (Advertisement) Regulations 1980.
4. **Appearance of Advertisements** Whilst the Company makes every effort to comply with requests, publication on a particular date or in a particular position cannot be guaranteed. The Company reserves the right to alter, suspend, cancel or reject an advertisement at its discretion even after the same has been accepted for publication without being liable to compensate you. You will not be charged for any advertisement which does not appear. If only a part of a series of advertisements appears you will only be charged for the advertisements in the series which actually appear. The Company does not guarantee the publication or extent of supporting editorial and your obligation to pay for advertising will not under any circumstances be dependent upon the appearance or content of editorial. No liability will be accepted for non-appearance of editorial. The Company does not guarantee that advertising will not appear for similar or the same subject matter to your advertisement and no liability shall be accepted as a result of such advertising appearing. It is the advertiser's responsibility to provide any amended copy, whether by electronic or other format, and the Company does not guarantee that it will be able to or will agree to modify, amend or alter any file or copy supplied to it.
5. **Liability** The Company's liability for any loss or damage caused by any error or omission in the advertisement or any other breach of contract shall not in any circumstances exceed a full refund of any price paid by the advertiser to the Company for the publication of the advertisement or the cost of a further or corrective advertisement of the same type as that which originally appeared. Where a series of advertisements is booked the Company's liability shall not in any circumstances exceed the value of the first advertisement in the series. In the event of any error, misprint or omission in the publication of the advertisement the Company will either re-publicise the advertisement or the relevant parts of the advertisement or make a reasonable refund or adjustment to the cost of the advertisement. If the error does not materially detract from the advertisement then no re-publication, refund or adjustment will be made. It is the advertiser's responsibility to check the content of advertisements and the Company will not accept any liability for loss, damage, or obligation to repair or replace or make a refund or adjustment, arising from re-publication of an advertisement containing an error, misprint or omission which has not been identified by the advertiser after first publication.
6. **Box numbers** The Company accepts no liability for loss or damage caused by delay in forwarding or omission to forward to the advertiser replies to Box Numbers. Box Numbers must not be used for sending goods, distributing circulars or communications from agents. The Company reserves the right to open and inspect all replies to Box Number and to destroy goods, circulars or communications from agents which are discovered during an inspection.
7. **Inspection** The Company shall be entitled at any time to inspect any goods or services advertised and may decline to carry further advertising if such inspection is not permitted or if in the Company's opinion the provision of further advertising facilities is not appropriate in view of the nature or quality of the goods or services.
8. **Indemnity** The advertiser, including any advertising agency involved in placing any advertisement, warrants that it has permission to use for publication by electronic and printed means all material which is included in the advertisement. The advertiser and any advertising agency involved in placing any advertisement agree to indemnify the Company in respect of all charges, costs, claims or damage arising out of the publication of the advertisement, whether the same result from actual or threatened legal action or from some other cause.
9. **Cancellation** On a request for cancellation or amendment of a classified advertisement being accepted, you will be given a cancellation or amendment number which must be quoted in all subsequent correspondence. Payment of the originally agreed price will be required in full for any advertisement in relation to which the advertiser is unable to supply a valid cancellation or amendment number. Cancellation can only be accepted if the Company is notified of the cancellation by no later than the following deadlines:- Lineage, Semi Display - By no later than 6.30pm on the working day prior to publication. Advertisements to appear on Monday must be cancelled by 10 am on the preceding Saturday Classified Display - By no later than 24 hours before the date of publication Colour/Features - By no later than 10 clear days before the date of publication To cancel Lineage, Semi Display and Classified Display advertisements please telephone 01902 317872. To cancel Colour/Features advertisements please speak to the Representative through whom the advertisement was booked.
10. **Rates** Advertising rates are as laid out in the Company's current rate card which is available on request from the Company's offices. The rates may be varied from time to time in the Company's absolute discretion and without prior notification of the intended variation. The revised rate will be charged for any advertising ordered after the date of variation.
11. **Payment** All gross advertising rates except classified lineage and semi-display are subject to a 0.1% Advertising Standards Board of Finance levy payable by advertisers to help finance the self-regulatory system administered by the Advertising Standards Authority.
12. **Data Protection Act** The advertiser's details will be retained by the Company for the purposes of administering our accounts records and so that the Company may notify the advertiser of future advertising opportunities which may be of interest to you. By placing advertising with the Company the advertiser agrees to your details being used for this purpose.
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24 hour service
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Any information
07773 560625.

Please like and share his Facebook page 'Find Missing Monty'

1

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Elderly & Disabled

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01384 378252

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2
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Music Shop

ASHBURY (Jazz), Takamine (Tan 20G), Tokai (Gold Star 1983), Tanglewood (Star), reasonable offers. 01902 679660.

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3 Home & Services

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Items Wanted

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Advertisers must ensure that they meet all necessary legal requirements for owning and using guns.

Guns & Dogs

NOTICE TO ADVERTISERS

Advertisers must ensure that they meet all necessary legal requirements for owning and using guns.

Pets Corner

NOTICE TO READERS

Please be aware that when purchasing a puppy there are some simple guidelines you can follow to ensure that you are not purchasing from a Puppy Farmer:

1. Try to ensure you visit the puppy whilst it is still with its Mother.

2. Do not arrange to collect a puppy from any other location than that of the breeder.

3. Ensure that you are given any KC documentation, if pedigree.

Whilst Midland News

Association publications take great care to avoid publication of advertisements from Puppy Farmers we cannot accept any liability should readers purchase from this kind of establishment.

Business Opportunities

READERS are recommended to take appropriate professional advice before entering into any obligations.

BUY LOCAL, SELL LOCAL

01902 317878

ClassifiedAds

NOTICE TO READERS

Please be aware that when purchasing a puppy there are some simple guidelines you can follow to ensure that you are not purchasing from a Puppy Farmer:

To check that anyone carrying out any gas work is Gas Safe Registered.

It is an offence under the Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998 to carry out gas work in the UK without being on the Gas Safe Register.

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Cupra now manufacturer in own right

By James Parker

The new Cupra Ateca has been revealed as the first car to come from Seat's performance division since it became its own separate manufacturer.

The Cupra badge has traditionally been used for Seat's go-faster models, but it was revealed last year that it would split off as a separate brand. Its remit is to build performance versions of Seat's cars, though without any Seat badging, and to run Seat's motorsport division.

Impressive

Its first car is the Cupra Ateca, a high-performance mid-sized SUV. Under the bonnet sits a 2.0-litre petrol engine making 296bhp, which is shared with the Seat Leon Cupra and various other Volkswagen Group vehicles such as the Golf R.

Performance is impressive for what is a large car, with the 0-60mph sprint taking 5.2 seconds and a top speed registered at 152mph.

The engine's mated to a seven-speed DSG automatic gearbox, which Cupra says has been engineered to offer quicker and smoother changes.

Power goes to all four wheels, and there are six drive modes to choose from – Cupra mode is for fast driving, improving engine response and volume, and stiffening the suspension.

On the outside, the regular Ateca has been given a mild reworking to give a sportier look, with a new body kit, black brake callipers, quad-exit exhaust and 19-inch diamond-cut



Inside Alcantara is used as a trim finish



Performance is impressive for what is a large car

alloy wheels. The new Cupra logo, which is designed to look like a tribal drawing, is present in copper at the front, back and on the wheels.

Inside, Alcantara is used on the door panels and seat upholstery, the steering wheel is covered in leather, and various trim pieces are



The Cupra badge has been used for Seat's go-faster models, but it was revealed last year it be a separate brand

finished in gloss black. Copper Cupra logos are again used throughout.

Matthias Rabe, executive vice-president for research and development at Seat, said: "Cupra Ateca offers versatility like no other brand.

"It's about a unique model in its segment,

with 296bhp, 4Drive and a new seven-speed DSG gearbox.

"It is the best example of balance between sportsmanship, fun at the wheel and ease of use in everyday life."

The Cupra brand has an aggressive growth strategy. At the Ateca's launch in Barcelona,

it revealed that it was working on hot versions of the Cupra hatchback and estate, and was taking over the Cupra TCR racing programme.

Cupra versions of the Ibiza and Arona are potentially in the works, as well as three as-yet unconfirmed models, which could take the range to 10 by the end of 2018.

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12 62	PEUGEOT 208 ACTIVE 1.4 HDI 5DR BLUE 32015 MILES	£5,995	£5,253	15 15
12 62	HYUNDAI I20 ACTIVE 5DR HB GREY 41015 MILES	£5,995	£5,695	06 06
12 12	MERCEDES BENZ A160 1.5 BLUE SILVER 48866 MILES	£5,995	£5,897	17 17
13 63	SKODA FABIA SE 1.2 *ALLOYS* BLUE 17803 MILES	£6,995	£6,387	08 58
13 13	SEAT IBIZA EST 1.6 FR TDI *SAT NAV* BLACK 62045 MILES	£6,995	£6,595	04 04
09 09	MINI COOPER S 1.6 CHILLI PACK GREY 44000 MILES	£6,995	£6,782	16 16
13 13	HYUNDAI IX20 ACTIVE 1.4 GREY 42000 MILES	£6,995	£6,787	13 13
15 15	VOLKSWAGON UP HIGH *SAT NAV* BLACK 23276 MILES	£7,750	£7,198	13 13
14 14	SPLASH 5DR HAT 1.2 SZ4 AUTO BLUE 6301 MILES	£7,650	£7,398	13 63
13 13	FORD FOCUS 1.6 ZETEC 125 AUTO SILVER 25436 MILES	£7,995	£7,695	11 61
14 64	SKODA OCTAVIA EST SE BUSINESS TDI RED 49515 MILES	£9,450	£8,912	15 65
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15 15	VOLKSWAGEN BEETLE DESIGN RETRO WHITE 10519 MILES	£12,495	£11,765	09 59
14 14	AUDI A1 S LINE TFSI WHITE 35990 MILES	£12,645	£12,000	11 11
17 17	RENAULT CAPTUR DYNAM S NAV DC SILVER 9650 MILES	£12,995	£12,295	16 66
15 65	VOLKSWAGEN POLO 1.8 GTI 5DR H WHITE 26127 MILES	£14,350	£13,687	14 64
15 15	AUDI A4 SE TECHNIK TDI CVT 4D GREY 36951 MILES	£14,995	£14,341	15 15
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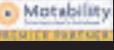
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15 65	ADAM SLAM 1.4 3DR RED N ROLL 18,200 MILES	£9295		
16 16	ADAM ENERGISED 1.2 I'LL BE BLACK 8,200 MILES	£9495	£9295	£200
16 66	ADAM ENERGISED 1.2 RED N ROLL 6,500 MILES	£9495		
17 17	ADAM ENERGISED 1.2 LET IT BLUE DELIVERY MILES 29 ONLY!	£9995		
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12 62	CORSA ACTIVE 1.4 3DR ASTEROID GREY ONLY 28,500 MILES	£5995		
14 14	CORSA S 1.2 5DR OLYMPIC WHITE 28,600 MILES	£5995		
12 12	CORSA LTD 1.2 3DR OLYMPIC WHITE/BLACK ONLY 27,300 MILES	£6495	£6295	£200
13 63	CORSA SXI 1.4 5DR ASTEROID GREY 38,000 MILES	£6495	£6195	£300
14 63	CORSA SXI 1.4 3DR OLYMPIC WHITE ONLY 14,700 MILES	£6495	£6250	£245
12 62	CORSA SRI 1.4 3DR CARBON FLASH 33,600 MILES	£6795	£6495	£300
13 63	CORSA LTD EDN 1.2 3DR FLAME RED 25,200 MILES	£6995	£6595	£400
11 61	CORSA SE 1.4 AUTOMATIC 5DR ASTEROID GREY ONLY 27,000 MILES	£6695		
14 64	CORSA EXCITE 1.4 5DR DEEP SKY BLUE 27,300 MILES	£6695		
14 14	CORSA SXI 1.4 5DR SOVEREIGN SILVER 43,700 MILES	£6995	£6795	£200
15 15	NEW CORSA LIFE 1.2 3DR FLAME RED 23,100 MILES	£6995		
14 14	CORSA LTD EDN 1.2 3DR FLAME RED 20,500 MILES	£7295		
14 14	CORSA LTD EDN 1.2 3DR FLAME RED 40,200 MILES	£7295	£6795	£500
15 15	NEW CORSA STING 1.0TURBO 3DR OLYMPIC WHITE 22,800 MILES STUNNING!	£7495	£7195	£300
15 15	CORSA SE 1.4 5DR SOVEREIGN SILVER 36,100 MILES	£7495	£7295	£200
14 64	NEW CORSA EXCITE 1.4 5DR DARK MOON BLUE 35,600 MILES, 14,700 MILES	£7995	£7695	£300
15 15	NEW CORSA EXCITE 1.4 5DR FLAME RED 14,200 MILES	£8495		
15 15	CORSA LTD EDN 1.4 5DR OLYMPIC WHITE 31,300 MILES	£8495		
15 15	CORSA DESIGN 1.4 AUTOMATIC 5DR ONLY 12,500 MILES	£9495		
16 16	NEW CORSA LTD EDN 1.4 3DR OLYMPIC WHITE ONLY 2,500 MILES	£9495		
16 16	CORSA LIMITED EDITION 1.4 3DR CARBON FLASH 7,600 MILES	£8695		
16 16	CORSA VXR 1.6T SATIN STEEL GREY 6,000 MILES (PERFORMANCE PACK)	£13295		
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13 63	ASTRA ENERGY 1.6 5DR TECHNICAL GREY 45,800 MILES	£6995	£6750	£245
14 14	ASTRA ENERGY 1.4 5DR ASTEROID GREY 22,000 MILES	£7495	£6995	£500
15 65	ASTRA LTD EDN 1.4TURBO OLYMPIC WHITE 17,300 MILES	£9995		
16 16	ASTRA SRI 1.0T POWER RED 12,500 MILES	£11495	£1195	£300
16 66	ASTRA SRI NAV 1.6CDTI 136ps 5DR POWER RED 12,800 MILES EX DEMO	£13995		
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17 67	MERIVA LIFE 1.4 5DR CHOICE OF COLOURS DELIVERY MILES	£10995	£9895	£1100
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14 64	INSIGNIA TECHLINE 2.0CDTI 5DR SOVEREIGN SILVER 25,400 MILES PLUS PACK		£10495	
16 16	INSIGNIA SRI NAV 2.0CDTI 5DR SILVER LAKE 36,800 MILES		£10995	
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15 65	FORD FIESTA ZETEC 1.25 5DR RED 15,000 MILES		£8495	
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17 66	KIA PICANTO SE 1.0 5DR MET BLACK 2,300 MILES		£8995	
15 15	CITROEN DS3 PURE TECH DSTYLE PLUS 1.2 3DR WHITE 16,300 MILES		£9495	£8995
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16 16	JEEP RENEGADE SPORT 1.6 MULTIJET 5DR MET BLACK 33,900 MILES		£11495	
15 15	MECEDES BENZ A180 SE AUTO 5DR MET GREY 22,000 MILES		£14000	£13750
11 61	LR RANGE ROVER EVOQUE DYNAMIC SI4 AUTO 4WD 3DR WHITE/BLACK 55,200 MILES		£21989	£21495
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The performance version of the Corsa – the VXR



By James Parker

Vauxhall marks a 25th birthday with a special offer on the iconic Corsa.

An era famous for Britpop, Walkmans, shell suits and The Spice Girls, the 1990s was a standout decade for British culture that welcomed another icon in 1993 – the Vauxhall Corsa.

One of the nation's most beloved vehicles, the Corsa, is celebrating its 25th year in the UK, and to mark the occasion Vauxhall is offering a brand new Corsa from just £149 per month, with a £149 initial rental* – just in time for it to wear a new '18' plate, too.

In a deal that would have surprised buyers back in 1993, let alone 2018, the Vauxhall Corsa on offer – an Energy three-door 1.4 (75PS) – is worlds apart from its original namesake.

For example, who'd have thought 25 years ago that a personal assistant could be accessed directly from the comfort of your car via Corsa's clever OnStar system?

But Vauxhall's best-seller has always moved with the times.

The Corsa was born with cassette players and now offers Apple CarPlay; its most popular engines have almost doubled in power; and its interior dimensions have grown significantly. But while design and tech have changed over 25 years, the Corsa's amazing



The Corsa A was renamed the Vauxhall Nova

value hasn't, its price only increasing by £3,850.

The original Corsa Supermini was first introduced alongside supermodels Kate Moss, Naomi Campbell, Christy Turlington and Linda Evangelista.

Like Kate Moss, who also made her screen debut at the time, the Corsa has been part of British culture since 1993.

As Vauxhall's best-selling model, over two million have been sold in the United Kingdom – that's the equivalent of nine purchases an hour.

Leon Caruso, retail sales director at Vauxhall Motors comments: "The Corsa has played such an integral part in British culture over the past 25 years, I think it'd be difficult to find someone who hasn't owned or had a friend or family member who has owned a model."

"That's why we're celebrating the Corsa's quarter-century anniversary year with our best-ever offer: a Corsa Energy for just £149 per month, with a £149 initial rental*."

"I encourage you to hot foot it down to your local Vauxhall retailer to take advantage of this fantastic, industry-leading offer."

For more details on the Corsa offer, go online to <http://www.vauxhall.co.uk> or visit your local Vauxhall retailer.

*Terms and conditions apply.

English Institute of Sport Sheffield



Joseph with students at the Northern England Open Championships towards the end of last year



Successful students celebrate their gradings at Burntwood Leisure Centre last month



Joe Morrell, Mya Brown, Sam Rushworth and Alex Monte-Godfrey



Joseph Mongan with Mya Brown who bagged a bronze and silver

Tommy not fazed by Ghent-ing arena bout

TOMMY Ghent believes the Genting Arena will be the perfect venue to get fans excited again following his four-year hiatus.

The 25-year-old from Coseley will compete on BCB Promotions' Now Or Never show on Saturday evening – just his third fight since returning in 2017 – when he takes on Lithuania's Arvydas Trizno.

'Rock n Rolla' has been reinvigorated since his comeback, with brother Richie in his corner, and wants to use this next fight to show he is a title contender. "I am getting back into my stride again and I am feeling more relaxed with each session," he said. "I am looking forward to getting back in the ring."

Also on the bill Birmingham's Andrew Robinson battles Brighton's Nicky Jenman for the vacant middleweight crown. Wolverhampton's Kyle Williams takes on Nottingham's Jordan Turner for the Midlands Area Bantamweight strap and Birmingham's Kash Ali steps in with Sheffield fighter David Howe for the Central Area Heavyweight crown.

Karate ace still gets kick out of teaching

A KARATE ace has rekindled his love for the sport thanks to his stepson's curiosity.

Joseph Mongan is a former Funakoshi world champion. He's also an ex-World Karate Federation European champion, a Commonwealth bronze medalist, and a third Dan black belt.

After admittedly falling out of love with a sport he has now rediscovered his passion after stepson Leo found his medals and his interest piqued.

Joseph had run a successful academy in Ipswich, but left it behind to move to Staffordshire with his wife. Following the gentle nudge from Leo, Joseph set up JGM Karate Academy in Norton Canes, near Cannock, and his current crop are beginning to replicate his success.

Three of them have picked up medals at national level, just two years since he opened the academy.

"Leo was searching through some stuff and just happened to stumble across my medals and trophies in a box," said Joseph.

Impressive

"He asked me if I would teach him, and that's where it all started, really. I had an academy back in Ipswich which me and my brother ran, and we had a lot of success there – some of our students won some very impressive medals."

The JGM Karate Academy now boasts more than 100 members – the oldest a grandmother in her 70s – with training at Jerome Primary School, Norton Canes Community Centre and Burntwood Leisure Centre. The club's first black belt vies to become a Dan in April and other club members are on their way to claiming belts.

Joseph accepts members from all age groups, backgrounds and abilities, and they have recently competed at the Kyu Grade English National Championships – picking up four medals.

Joe Morell, aged 16, the club captain, won bronze in the Kata. Sam Rushworth, 14, also picked up a bronze in Kata at the 14-15 age group, and Mya Brown, 11, bagged both a bronze in the Kata and a silver in the Kumite, making her a double national medalist. "Mya is looking at attending the British

SPORTING FEATURE

By Adam Washbrook

"Some come because they perhaps struggle to manage their anger, and the sport helps teach them discipline. We really have helped people in all ways, and it's very rewarding."

Championships in May, and we're working very closely with her," said Joseph.

"To be able to compete in both styles at her age is a fantastic achievement.

"There's international championships later in the year, in Poland and Venice. There's a chance we could have members competing in those too."

There has also been success at the USA Open, Central England Championships, The Yorkshire Open and the KAA National Championships.

"We have very high hopes for them and their futures," added Joseph.

But while there is success on the mat, Joseph admits money is sometimes a cause for concern, especially since Karate England cut the funding it used to provide.

"The students deserve recognition, and the sport needs it," he said. "We're actively looking for sponsorships because equipment and travel to tournaments and such doesn't come free."

"Without the recognition and the Press for these events, people don't know we need the sponsorship and it can be difficult at times. At the moment, parents fund the majority of event participation, and we do what we can to help."

"For the English Nationals, we put on a raffle at the Christmas party. People were very kind and

we made £100 for the students, which we contributed towards the competitors' fees, meaning they paid around £15 per event."

A 100 Kata challenge last week has so far raised around £350 which will help towards tournament entry and travel. More than 20 club members took part in the challenge to do 100 Katas.

Joseph himself has also been sent back to school to learn a new style for his students. "I regraded Shotokan to help some of my students. It was a certainly a challenge!" he said.

"It was a lot of hard work and a lot of late nights, but I got there. It's very interesting the difference in fitness and strength conditioning required, but it sparks my enjoyment to be learning something new, and to develop and push myself."

Though his students' medals are at the forefront of his success, the 33-year-old says there are many more rewarding factors to teaching. It's something he says has taken him by surprise. I was telling my wife, it's almost unbelievable the variety of reasons that we have people come to the academy," he added.

Discipline

"We've had people coming looking to learn basic self-defence, some coming to improve their fitness. You kind of expect those, but then on the other side of the spectrum we've had people come who are low on confidence and who use it help them grow."

"Some come because they perhaps struggle to manage their anger, and the sport helps teach them discipline. We really have helped people in all ways, and it's very rewarding."

With karate now an official sport for the 2020 Olympics, Joseph hopes the academy can grow in line with the sport.

"We're working with academy associates at the moment and we just want to keep growing," he said. "We're looking to start a karate league soon and invite other clubs in the area so that we can raise the competition standards."

"There's the British Championships in May and we've got high hopes. I'm just looking forward to seeing how things go."

To get involved with the academy, contact them via their Facebook page – JGM Karate Academy.

Opening night of darts academy hits bullseye

THE opening night of the West Midlands Darts Academy certainly hit the bullseye. Allen's Sports Bar in Tipton was the venue for the venture that aims to get youngsters aged between six and 17 interested in the game.

Organiser and coach Russell Dingley said 25 young dart aces checked in for the opening night. He said: "I expected six or seven kids, so it was a fantastic turnout. The darting community around here is massive so we were really happy with the opening."

Alfie Jacques, who won the JDC tour in 2017 aged just 14, turned out to support the opening of the academy. He said: "It was fantastic to see such a great turnout, because it shows how many people are interested in darts."

"It's great for players like me because I know that I've got competition and I've got to keep up and play against players like this because they are going to come on just as well as I have in the future."

For more details about the academy, search West Midlands Junior Darts Academy on Facebook.

Extra seats as fans flock to Edgbaston

EDGBASTON is to increase its capacity for its three highest profile matches this year. Warwickshire announced they are to install a temporary stand to increase the ground's 24,550 capacity by 850 seats as England face Australia in an international T20 match on June 27, for the First Test against India from August 1 and for the domestic T20 Blast finals day on September 15.

A temporary extra tier of seating will be placed above the Stanley Barnes Stand. Gareth Roberts, commercial director at Warwickshire CCC, said: "This will be the third time in the last four years that we have brought in a temporary stand as a result of the popularity of the fixtures we are hosting."

The Vitality IT20 against Australia is now 75 per cent sold out, while year-on-year ticket sales for Vitality Blast Finals Day are 170 per cent up on last year.

"We've also seen huge demand for day three of the Test match against India, which will be a very special occasion as England's 1,000th Test."

Sport

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Hughes hits first goals in Yeltz colours

Nantwich 1 Halesowen Town 3
FORMER West Bromwich Albion hero Lee Hughes scored twice, his first goals for Halesowen Town as The Yeltz gained a victory in Cheshire.

He also had a role in the other goal for Ivor Lawton as John Hill's side picked up three vital Evo-Stik League Premier Division points.

Hughes starred with his first goals in a Halesowen Town shirt as the Yeltz secured three vital points.

With Evo-Stik League Premier Division relegation rivals Sutton Coldfield Town also winning, it was vital Halesowen gained all three points and it was a solid performance overall from Hill's men.

Meanwhile, new signing John Oyenuga, who joined from Connah's Quay Nomads, started on the bench.

Hughes could have put Halesowen ahead after just three minutes but put his shot over the bar.

Lee Knight then scuffed his shot as he went one-on-one with Nantwich goalkeeper Myles Boney.

Ivor Lawton headed in though on 12 minutes when Knight set him up after Hughes had initially crossed.

Nantwich got on level terms six minutes later when Matthew Bell scored from the edge of the area.

But on 21, Enoch Ekongo provided a neat pass for Hughes to drill home and make it 2-1.

The two seem to be forming a decent partnership as Ekongo again turned provider on 62 minutes.

His nice run and cross was finished by Hughes to seal the win.

• Hughes bankrupt – page 3

Athletes brave the wintry conditions

HALESOWEN athletes braved the worst conditions seen at the Annual Midland Road Relays. The hilly course consisted of 5k short legs and a 5.5-mile, long legs. Near blizzard conditions at times meant an arduous task for most athletes.

The young athletes took on a 5k championship with the under-13 girls taking gold and the under-13 boys silver.

The girls provided all three individual medallists with Kerianna Huxley, Grace Coles and Ryley Malone-Priest. For the boys, Thomas Harris was fourth, Billy Papworth in sixth and Joseph Clarke seventh.

The Senior women finished 16th of 45 with the B Team in 25th place.

The Men's 12 Stage consisted of four long legs and eight short legs, the A team also coming home 16th of the 45 complete teams, the B team hit by injury failed to finish a full team with eight runners.

Both the Senior Men and Ladies have qualified for the National Championships in April.

Hagley Lording it for indoor finals

WORCESTERSHIRE county champions Hagley will play at the home of cricket after beating sides representing Bedfordshire and Wales.

They will meet Woodlands, from Yorkshire, the northern regional champions, in the second semi-final of the national indoor finals at Lord's Cricket Academy at 12.45pm on Saturday. The winners will take on Devon or Kent in the final.

At Edgbaston, Hagley were set an imposing total of 149-3 by Potters Town which they reached for the loss of only two wickets. They followed up

with a win over Haverfordwest who posted only 98-5 which Hagley passed with one wicket down.

In the WCB indoor league, Coombes Wood (87-5) beat Oldswinford (74-4) by 13 runs.

After losing opener Carl Whyte, Coombes Wood's usually reliable batsmen struggled. Captain Mike Langford (25) dug in, but the total was below par. In reply, Oldswinford started well, losing the first wicket at 45 (Paddy Addis 27 no). The result looked inevitable but the runs dried up and the rate required rocketed. The return of Addis

failed to produce the runs, giving Coombes Wood an unlikely win to stay top of the league.

In the other game, Stourbridge (88-5) beat Pedmore (68 all out) by 20 runs.

Stourbridge batsmen too found it hard going, apart from Ali Rashid with 34 no against bowlers who were a trifle wayward.

Pedmore again found runs hard to come by as the opening bowlers Mikesh Patel and Javeed Nazir bowled their three overs conceding only 33 runs for three wickets. Pedmore fell further behind the rate and were all out in the 11th over.

'RUTHLESS' IN RING RETURN

REIGNING Midlands middle-weight champion Tyler Denny will return to action headlining a six-fight card at the Venue in Dudley next month.

Fight night has been scheduled for April 7, ten months on from when paid pugilists last performed under those lights.

Denny, Kane Baker, Les Byfield, Ryan 'Stewart' Davies, Danny Ball and Humza Ali will occupy the home corner.

Denny laces on the gloves for the first time since his title glory on September 30 of last year, outpointing Tom Stokes for the vacant strap. 'Ruthless' has now set his sights on the English crown, currently held by Elliott Matthews, but will first keep busy with the local six-round contest.

The 26-year-old from Rowley Regis has utilised his southpaw skills to the tune of seven points victories from nine pro contests, with two draws.

Baker, from Bartley Green, has been hitting the road since his last fight at the Venue, where he's racked up three of his five victories as a pro.

Baker, 27, has boxed at the famed York Hall in London twice and at the SSE Hydro in Belfast against the likes of Conor Benn, Gary Cully and Sanjeev Sahota.

Tividale's Davies uses the moniker 'Stewart' – his middle name – under instruction from the British Boxing Board of Control. He's undefeated in four bouts with one TKO to his name. There's already two other Ryan Davies boxing professionally but RP Davies has retired on medical grounds.

Kingswinford's Ball has a couple of first round TKOs to his credit, just four outings into his professional journey. Durable campaigners MJ Hall and Chris Jenkinson have gone the distance with the 21-year-old, but Martin Karbrel and Paul Cummings were both wiped out early.

Tickets, priced at £35 or £50 ringside, are available by calling 07976 283 157.

Maria took on world champ



From left, women's world champion Ng On Yee with Reanne Evans and Maria Catalano

DUDLEY potter Maria Catalano got to the WLBS World Women's Snooker Championship final in Malta but suffered a heavy 5-0 defeat to Hong Kong's reigning champion Ng On Yee.

On Yee whitewashed Dudley's Catalano, aged 36, who rose to number three in the world rankings after making her fifth world final, and first since 2013, on Saturday. Catalano had se-

cured her final place earlier that day having stunned 32-year-old 11-time world champion Reanne Evans by a 4-3 scoreline in an all-Dudley semi-final.

The World Women's Snooker Tour will return for its final event of the 2017/18 season with the Women's Festival of Snooker, April 13-16, at the Northern Snooker Centre, Leeds.



Students belt up as karate coach rekindles passion

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Heartache as Glassboys twice denied by late goal

STOURBRIDGE suffered late heartache in their last two matches, home on Saturday and away on Tuesday night.

It had looked as though the Glassboys would head home from Witton with a hard-earned share of the spoils only to be caught out by a corner as Tom Owens crashed his header into the net with just two minutes still on the clock.

Early on the home side twice went close, through Owens and Steve Tames, but Stourbridge struggled to create anything of note in the first half and it was a similar story early in the second period.

On-loan Wolves winger Nicolae Carnat had joined the action with 20 minutes to go but it was Witton who looked the more likely to break the deadlock, Tames seeing a fierce drive deflected just wide of Mark Gould's goal. Once Owens scored, the Glassboys pushed for an equaliser but failed to seriously test Calvin Hare in the Albion goal.

Gary Hackett had already been a frustrated manager after Stourbridge gave away a last-minute winner against Ashton United.

Substitute Josh Granite was given space in the box to head home from a corner and take all three Evo-Stik Premier points back to Greater Manchester.

Gould in the Stour goal was unlucky right before the break when he blocked a shot by Nick Evangelinos but the ball went back to him to make no mistake with his second chance.

Substitute Luke Shearer injected pace into the Glassboys' attack, but it was on-loan Shrewsbury midfielder Chris Gallagher who set up the equaliser on 54 minutes, Kaiman Anderson providing the finish.

The introduction of Ashton's Khanye Makhosini proved vital on 70 minutes when he got down the left and crossed for Evangelinos to finish. Almost immediately after Shearer was brought down in the box and Leon Broadhurst crashed home the penalty to make it 2-2. But the unmarked Granite rocked up in the box and rose to secure all three points.

Hackett's side head to another of the play-off contenders on Saturday when they take on Farsley Celtic.

Meanwhile, the Glassboys this week agreed the return of Bradley Birch on dual registration terms with Worcester City.

★★★

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